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The Shape of Things

✶

INFLATIONISTS ARE HAVING THEIR INNINGS again this week in the debate on extending the President's power to devalue the dollar. Led by McCarran and Thomas of Oklahoma, a group of eleven Senators from the silver states have introduced an amendment calling for the issuance of $2,000,000,000 in additional currency. This currency would be backed by gold, one-fourth of which would be taken from the "sterilized" gold holdings and three-fourths from the stabilization fund. The amendment would also increase the price paid for domestic silver from the present exorbitant 64 cents an ounce to $1.04; and it would authorize a bonus of 25 per cent in farm commodities to foreign countries offering to pay for their purchases of such commodities in silver. These proposals are not particularly dangerous, if only because they would be almost entirely ineffective. At the present moment there is 40 per cent more money in circulation than in 1929. The additional $2,000,000,000 would quickly gravitate to the banks, where it would swell still further the large excess reserves. The money paid for silver at home and abroad would serve only to create new purchasing power for a handful of speculators and shareholders in mining companies. Of a wholly different character is the program for self-liquidating capital expenditures which has been worked out by the Treasury in cooperation with the Federal Reserve Board. Unlike the McCarran-Thomas proposals, this plan involves the creation of new wealth. Every dollar's worth of new purchasing power would be backed by new construction. Our inflationists never seem to realize that mere money is not wealth; nor is it necessarily a help in creating the things that people really need.

✶

PROFIT-SHARING RECEIVED ENTHUSIASTIC indorsement from the Senate subcommittee which has just completed a ten-month study of its possibilities. It is praised as a method of introducing greater balance into the economic system by relating labor's income to the rise and fall of prices. This it undoubtedly would do. But it is also held up as an attractive and subtle means of undermining unions and combating demands for higher

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wages. "Wage increases," the subcommittee declared, "create the same result as the serving of red meat to animals at the zoo—satisfaction for the moment, a more ravenous appetite later. . . . Blend the wage scale with a profit-sharing differential and the same human being who . . . previously concentrated his attention on wages . . . will discard the combative spirit and move in a cooperative direction." The plan is openly defended as a method of preserving "our capitalistic system of private-profit initiative." On the all-important issue of how much of the profits are to be divided with the employees the subcommittee is annoyingly vague. But the inference from the plans singled out for approval is that the proportion is to be kept small. More alarming is the suggestion that a contributory profit-sharing plan might be used as a substitute for unemployment and old-age insurance. It is perhaps just as well that the subcommittee had no specific recommendations for legislation to compel the adoption of its panacea.

*

THE VERDICT WHICH, AFTER TWENTY-TWO years of investigation and juridical process, finds Germany responsible for the Black Tom and Kingsland disasters in 1916 and 1917 is sensational. Never before has the government of a great power been convicted of fraud by an international tribunal. It should be understood, however, that it was not the Nazi government which first gave the fraudulent testimony. The bureaucracy of the Weimer Republic fought the American claims by every possible means, attempting to liquidate the war in the old war spirit. The Nazi government, of course, continued to offer the manufactured evidence, and when it saw that the case was lost, it characteristically recalled its representative from the Mixed Claims Commission, as if by this new act of sabotage it could absolve Germany of responsibility for worse things. For once Nazi trickery did not work. After the verdict was reported, however, the German embassy in Washington announced that it considered the action "legally invalid" and would ignore it. But the German funds to pay the fifty-three-million-dollar award to the claimants are in America's possession.

*

EIGHTEEN STUDENTS OF THE GWYNN'S FALLS Park Junior High School in Baltimore, where the percentage of students of German descent is relatively high, have been suspended for staging a riot in which a fourteen-year-old Jewish boy was marked on his forehead with a swastika and on his neck with an H—for Hebrew. Fights between schoolboys are not news, and one must admit that even in American schools the majority occasionally deals unjustly with the minority—Jews, Negroes, the foreign-born. The Baltimore incident is significant because it is the first to present the typical aspects of Nazi racial warfare, which so far have been absent from our schools. Their appearance now indicates how far Nazi propaganda has already advanced in certain communities. The Baltimore authorities are investigating, the Dies committee will send its own investigator, and the Maryland Interracial Commission has appointed a committee to consider public-school education in race relations. We hope the affair will not be hushed up, and that the significance of their act will be made clear to the boys. But more general preventive measures are urgently needed. Reports from all over the United States tell of intensified anti-Semitic activities in universities and high schools. Father Coughlin's people are especially diligent.

*

WARNING THAT THE BLOOM NEUTRALITY bill will encounter bitter opposition in the Senate was delivered last week when twenty-one diehard isolationists signed a pact to oppose repeal of the mandatory arms embargo. It is now assumed that the Bloom resolution will pass the House without serious difficulty. But there is a strong movement to postpone consideration in the Senate until the beginning of the next session. Such a delay, it need hardly be pointed out, would offer the axis powers an added inducement to make a move now while they are relatively better prepared, on the assumption that the United States would hesitate to change its policy once war had actually broken out. The Bloom bill is far from ideal. It makes no distinction between aggressors and their victims, and it incorporates the very dubious cash-and-carry principle. But it has the advantage of being more flexible than either the present act or the unsatisfactory Pittman cash-and-carry bill. And it is the only bill that has a chance of passage at this late day.

*

UNLESS PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT CHOOSES NOT to run for a third term—and gets his choice—we are in for a year of spellbinding by the heroes of history. Jefferson and Washington have already taken to the hustings, and anyone with discernment can spot Grant, T. R., and a dozen others dusting off their campaign shrouds. The difficulty is that the great don't seem to care whose soap-box they mount, and many of them are prepared to speak impartially for both sides. Jefferson, under the auspices of Harold Ickes, started off by poohpoohing the third-term myth. The New York *Herald Tribune,* however, had no trouble in getting from him a denunciation of the principle of "perpetual reeligibility." He did demand rotation in office—to be applied, incidentally, to Congressmen as well as Presidents—but he favored making Washington an exception to start with. Washington, as the originator of the anti-third-term tradition, is the ultimate authority for the Republicans in

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their opposition to another helping of Roosevelt. They are therefore likely to swallow hard when mention is made of the note to Lafayette in which Washington wrote: "I can see no propriety in precluding ourselves from the services of any man who, on some great emergency, shall be deemed universally most capable of serving the public." How, indeed, will the G. O. P. explain away the advice of their patron saint, Alexander Hamilton, who argued that any such limitation "would be depriving the community of the experience gained by the Chief Magistrate in the exercise of his office"? The plain fact is that while a limitation on Presidential tenure is normally desirable, a third term in the last analysis is good or bad depending on the candidate and the circumstances. If the founding fathers make that apparent they will have done their country one more service and may retire into their textbooks with an extra footnote apiece.

*

THE HORRORS GOING ON BEHIND THE CLOSED borders of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia are revealed even in the censored news dispatches which have reached the outside world. One of the most recent dispatches says that Walter Tschuppik, journalist and publisher, "awaits his death sentence." Among the new victims of Nazi justice, Walter Tschuppik is an outstanding character. This is not his first experience as a prisoner of Hitler. In March, 1938, he was arrested in Munich for publishing a courageous weekly which was spreading the doctrine of tolerance and Christian humanism through the Bavarian countryside. After he had been a year in prison the intervention of Masaryk and Benes obtained his exchange for Nazi spies arrested in Czechoslovakia. He wrote a remarkable book about his experiences with the Nazis, and later edited a German weekly in Prague in which he fought passionately against the "brown plague." The pact of Munich did not stop him. On the contrary, from then on he printed his paper in the Czech language as well, until the Czech government suppressed it on orders from Hitler a few days before the German army marched in. Tschuppik then tried to escape, but was caught and arrested.

Showdown in the East

THE Japanese blockade of the British and French concessions in Tientsin appears to have precipitated the long-awaited showdown between Japan and the Western powers in the Far East. It has been evident for months that a crisis was approaching. The Japanese occupation of Hainan and the Spratly Islands a few months ago was a sign that Japan was preparing to strike directly against European and American interests. More recently the Japanese tested Western resistance at Kulangsu, the foreign area at Amoy. The results were not encouraging to Japan, largely because of American initiative. Yet there seems to have been some force propelling Japan toward a showdown regardless of consequences.

Just why Japan should seek a quarrel with Britain and France when its campaign against China is meeting unexpected snags is difficult to explain with assurance. It is partly a matter of prestige. Someone must be blamed for the failure of the China campaign. The Soviet Union has shown an annoying habit of fighting back each time it is attacked. The United States is too powerful to challenge directly. But England and France are relatively weak and so deeply involved in Europe that they cannot very well act alone. Moreover, their interests stand sharply athwart Japanese ambitions in China. A victory over them would do much to reconcile the Japanese people to their government's blunders in the Chinese conflict. There is also a distinct possibility that the Japanese demands at Tientsin are connected with axis activities in Europe. Tokyo's rejection of the proposed anti-Comintern military alliance was a severe blow to the extremists who have been riding high in recent years. Their traditional method of regaining dominance after a setback has been to manufacture an "incident" involving the nation's prestige. This one may well be of that character.

In any case the crisis is a real one. The Japanese concept of "face" makes it difficult for Tokyo to back down once it has taken a stand. A retreat by Britain at this stage would not only involve the surrender of substantial British interests in China but seriously undermine British prestige in the East. As usual the affair appears to have caught the government wholly unprepared to make appropriate counter-moves. The British navy is almost entirely in European waters, and the Singapore base is useless without strong naval forces.

Economic penalties by Great Britain against Japan would be meaningless without the cooperation of the United States, which has so far given no hint of its position. American interests are, of course, affected, though not as directly as those of Great Britain. While we have no concessions in China, Americans have long benefited from the British and other foreign concessions. Conquest of those concessions by Japan would wipe out a large share of the fairly substantial American investments in China. That this is recognized was proved last week when certain large American enterprises wrote off their Chinese investments. Thus, the financial and humanitarian interests of the United States are on the same side of the fence. A strong stand by the State Department would have wide popular support. Perhaps the most striking evidence of this was contained in a recent Gallup poll which showed 74 per cent of the American people definitely on the side of China, 72 per cent in favor

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of an embargo of arms shipments to Japan, and 66 per cent prepared to boycott all Japanese goods. It is safe to say that an overwhelming majority of those who want to see the United States take some action to restrain Japan have no desire to defend American economic interests in China. Their primary concern is the preservation of peace. They obviously have learned that by selling to Japan or buying silk and other Japanese products the United States is strengthening the forces of aggression. That this is indeed the case is revealed in a recent editorial in the Tokyo *Nichi-Nichi,* reprinted in *Trans-Pacific,* the weekly edition of the *Japan Advertiser:*

> The prospects are alarming, for a decline in silk exports [to America] will be a serious hindrance to the government's policy of acquiring foreign currency to finance the purchase of materials needed by this country to meet the situation arising from the China incident.

This quotation clearly suggests that Japan's attack on the foreign concessions is an expression of weakness rather than strength. Its armies are stalemated in the vastness of China. Its gold supply has dwindled to less than $100,000,000. But these difficulties could be overcome if Britain and the United States were bludgeoned into making substantial political and economic concessions. If this strategy is to be successfully circumvented, the United States will have to add its tremendous economic weight to the pressure against Japan.

The New Relief Bill

THESE are heartbreaking moments for millions of Americans; both those whose future hinges directly on the survival of WPA, and those who realize that free institutions will not indefinitely survive mass insecurity. The new Federal Relief bill passed by the House on the night of June 16 is the fitting product of a cruel, senseless investigation. Its provisions are a blue-print for nation-wide suffering and the slow disintegration of the work-relief system. Few politicians dare advocate the dole; they would rather attack "communism" on the Theater Project. The same caution has inspired the committee to advise retention of some of the forms of the WPA structure. But its heart is to be removed. Nineteen carefully planned "restrictions" are the instruments for the operation.

The appropriation itself is inadequate. During the past year WPA employed an average of 3,000,000 workers; the sum now voted by the House—$1,447,000,000—will provide for 2,000,000. The rest must scramble for places on already swollen relief rolls. Unfortunately this appropriation was all that the President asked, perhaps on the theory that a conciliatory gesture to the "economy" bloc would avert a frontal attack on the WPA machinery. It merely encouraged the attack. The House committee listened in rapt attention to exhibits of "radicalism" among relief workers; it was deaf to Colonel Harrington's moving defense of WPA and the men it employed. And the "restrictions" subsequently formulated were passed with only slight modifications by the House.

As the result of one, WPA's whole construction program will be shattered. Since no project costing more than $50,000 can be undertaken under the revised program, leaf-raking on a modest scale is likely to dominate future WPA schedules. The Theater Project is to be annihilated at once. Officially the other arts projects may continue if localities sponsor them. It is certain that they will not. The day this bill becomes law, one of the most promising cultural adventures in our history will face extinction.

The list of restrictions resembles a Chamber of Commerce manifesto. The prevailing wage clause is to be abandoned; it is a defense of union standards, and it dims the attraction of jobs at starvation rates in private industry. But perhaps the most inhuman and defenseless decree of all is the rule that all WPA workers who have served more than eighteen months must be summarily dismissed. They are to spend sixty days seeking private employment; then they will be "considered" for re-employment on WPA. Ostensibly this measure is aimed at the Workers' Alliance, which has resolutely fought for a measure of security on WPA. But it is more than that. It is part of the effort to perpetuate the atmosphere of insecurity without which WPA workers might lose their "initiative." Only men over forty-five who are heads of families are exempt from the purge.

In almost every detail the bill represents a retreat from the elementary decencies of a relief program. In January, 1937, *The Nation* pleaded for a system which would guarantee aid to all the needy and sponsor valuable work projects under conditions approximating as closely as possible those in private industry. It would, for example, guarantee standard wages and working conditions, and the right to organize. It would be founded on the assumption that unemployment is no longer an "emergency" problem and that a planned, long-term relief structure is vitally necessary. In at least some degree the WPA has represented a fulfilment of that program. But the fiction of "emergency" has never been given up, and the fundamental insecurity has remained. As a result, a primary purpose of planned relief—the stimulation of purchasing power—has never been fully realized.

Enactment of this measure would reaffirm principles which are utterly intolerable both economically and psychologically. If the New Dealers have vision and tenacity, they will make the fight a decisive one when the bill reaches the Senate. It is one on which they can still rally the country's surviving liberalism. A defeat will be disastrous enough; a defeat without a last-ditch battle will open the gates for unconscionable reaction.

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Lull Before Appeasement

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

HITLER manipulates lulls as effectively as he does crises. Usually he creates both; but the recent lull, now fast receding over Europe's horizon, was forced upon him by the sudden and unlooked-for activity of the British government following the series of dictator moves in March. England stirred—sufficiently to force Chamberlain's hand and in time to save Danzig and Pomorz, at least for the moment. The "peace front" began to take shape. Hitler apparently subsided. And Europe's population again drew a deep breath—an exercise that is becoming a rare luxury.

But no one with any political sense took the relaxation as a sign of fascist retreat. At most it could be counted as proof that a gesture of firmness was enough to make the dictators pause. What was obviously needed to bring about a definite halt to aggression plans was a solid, stubborn front of nations prepared and publicly pledged to resist all further attacks by the axis powers in any direction whatsoever. That front is not yet complete; and the lull is about over.

Even while it lasted, Hitler and, in less degree, Mussolini employed the breathing space to further their unchanged ends.

Hitler used it to popularize his "encirclement" story, driving home to some 80,000,000 Germans the theory that Great Britain is welding an armed ring around Germany, poisoning the mind of Europe with lies and a propaganda of hate, and threatening the peace. So successful is this campaign that the British government has created a propaganda ministry with the chief object of counteracting its effect. But a defensive propaganda designed to correct errors can never compete with a good lively campaign of lies.

Hitler and Mussolini have admitted and glorified their armed support of Franco, the existence of which they so long indignantly denied. They welcomed home the first contingents of troops from Spain with huge official celebrations and speeches boasting of their successful intervention and emphasizing the bonds which hold their nations close to triumphant Spanish fascism.

Hitler has intensified his pressure on Czechoslovakia. Prominent Czechs, including Votja Benes, the brother of the former President, have escaped to neighboring countries with stories of imprisonments, tortures, and executions comparable with those in Austria after *Anschluss*. And reports from inside the conquered provinces agree that even the forms of self-government are being wiped out. Hitler's dispatch of Himmler to handle Czech unrest is a clear symbol of the change. In Slovakia, "freed" from the Czechs by the Führer and guaranteed permanent independence, similar if less intense disaffection and repression have been reported, and several thousand Slovak soldiers have escaped into Poland to form an anti-Nazi legion in the expected event of war. Czech soldiers and officers have also been slipping over the border to form a legion in France.

Despite German denials complete control of the conquered provinces seem almost certain. But even without this formality, German troops have been massing along the hundred-mile Polish frontier in Slovakia; they are garrisoned in secret camps and act with complete disregard of the Slovak authorities, military and civil.

In Danzig last Saturday and Sunday, Goebbels told the local Nazis that they were safe in Hitler's bosom and could count on a return to the Reich. He failed to name the day or reveal the method of their homecoming. But his words were not without meaning. They were typical pre-crisis Nazi speeches, combining stimulation, promise, and contempt for opposition—speeches designed to keep the pot simmering without boiling over.

Meanwhile the anti-Hitler bloc has been shockingly slow in forming. No adequate excuse has been offered by Great Britain for its failure to accept Russia's terms and complete the alliance. The Soviet government has shown itself a tough bargainer, but its demands, as far as they have been made public, are reasonable. They are based on the assumption that only a comprehensive plan of military resistance on all fronts can either prevent aggression or win a war. Whether the report is true that Hitler helped stiffen Stalin's terms by showing him proof that Chamberlain at Munich had offered Germany a free hand in the east, may never be learned. But the sure knowledge that such was Britain's hope must have helped to increase Russian stubbornness. The delay, no matter where the fault lies, has done more to increase general European uneasiness than any other single factor.

One more element of uncertainty must still be mentioned—the continuing maneuvers of the Vatican. That the Pope wants peace no one need doubt. But the peace he seeks is plainly one of further appeasement, coupled with the elimination of Moscow. He has denied the report that he intended to call a five-power conference; but whether he did or not, his agents are active and the center of their efforts is Warsaw. Various dispatches indicate that the French Foreign Office and the French army are strongly opposed to a new Vatican-arranged Munich; while Halifax and, of course, Chamberlain are working for its success. It may well be that the lack of progress at Moscow is due less to Russian intransigence than to Chamberlain's desire to stall along in the hope that the Pope's efforts may still save England from a Soviet alliance.

The relationship to the coming European crisis of Japan's bold test of British prestige in China is yet to be disclosed. Japan is faced with such complex difficulties

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of its own, some of which are discussed editorially this week, that the Tientsin blockade cannot be considered merely a part of axis politics. But at least it is geared to the axis in such a way as to offer maximum satisfaction to Germany and maximum anxiety to Britain.

So the lull ends. It began as the direct result of a show of strength and direction on the part of Britain. It ends as the direct result of British wavering and indecision and hints of a renewed willingness to make a deal. What will happen now, no one can safely say. We can only keep an eye on the points where tension focuses —on Poland and Danzig and Czechoslovakia, on Spain, on Moscow and Rome, on Tientsin. Only one prediction is safe: appeasement is just around the corner.

General Johnson's Plot

BY KENNETH G. CRAWFORD

Washington, June 19

NOT to be outdone by a former comrade in arms, General Hugh S. Johnson has ferreted out a subversive plot, too. He seems to be as alarmed about his emergency as Moseley was about his. On June 15 and June 16, more than three weeks after Assistant Secretary of State A. A. Berle had testified before the Temporary National Economic Committee, Johnson suddenly let go with two columns in his best awake-and-arise manner, assuring his customers that the reds were coming and Berle was their advance guard.

As exposed in two perspiring pieces, the plot is this: The devious boys of the janizariat—Ben Cohen, Tom Corcoran, Isador Lubin, Jerome Frank, Leon Henderson, and Pete Nehemkis—have mesmerized Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney of Wyoming, a "conscientious Irishman," and are using him to camouflage preparations for the new revolution. "Benny" Cohen is the arch-conspirator. He is going to overthrow capitalism by the "viciously dangerous" practice of extending government credit to fields of enterprise which the private banking system cannot or will not serve.

So worked up about it did Johnson become that some clients toned down his copy, taking out personal references to Berle in the interest of decent taste. By selecting disjointed quotations Johnson proved in his columns that Berle's outline of the "Fourth New Deal"—Johnson put over the only good one, the first—contemplated not only communism but "advanced communism." The quotations selected by Johnson were the same as those previously used by the Chicago *Tribune* to prove the same thing. The passage leaned upon most heavily by both the *Tribune* and Johnson was this: "Briefly the government will have to enter into the direct financing of activities now supposed to be private; and [the result of] a continuance of that direct financing must be inevitably that the government ultimately will control and own those activities. . . . Over a period of years, the government will gradually come to control most of the productive plants of the United States."

Johnson carefully refrained, as did the *Tribune*, from quoting Berle's next line: "This is certainly so fundamental a change in the course of American life that the decision to make it should be taken for reasons other than relief of a series of temporary emergencies." Neither did Johnson mention that Berle went on to state his own personal preference for private ownership and operation except in certain industries of a public-utility nature. What Berle very clearly said was that he favored changes in the country's financial system to ward off more radical changes in its social system. In the quotations ripped from their context Berle was outlining the alternative he hoped might be avoided.

Two explanations of Johnson's belated interpretation of the testimony are possible: either the General cribbed his piece from the *Tribune* without reference to the text or he independently followed the *Tribune* technique of deliberate distortion. Whichever is the true one, I am less sorry now that I was soundly beaten several years ago when I tried to persuade the Washington Newspaper Guild to accept Johnson's application for membership.

Johnson could scarcely have had his own stuff in mind when he commented that the proceedings of the T. N. E. C. had been "better reported and less noticed than any investigation of our time." Raymond Clapper, his columning colleague, has, to be sure, done a magnificent job of spelling out the proceedings. So has Richard Strout of the *Christian Science Monitor*. The New York *Times* has had excellent dispatches, but it hasn't always used them. The press associations have done an able job, but much of their copy likewise has hit the wastebaskets.

On June 15, one of the days Johnson was wringing his hands over the approach of "advanced communism," the committee took testimony showing that rates charged by insurance companies run as much as 300 per cent higher than the insurance rates of Massachusetts savings banks operating under the system devised by former Justice Louis D. Brandeis. Whereas the ten-year average

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cost of savings-bank insurance for a man of thirty-five is $27.37 per $1,000, the same thing purchased from any one of twenty-seven private companies is priced at from $46.01 (Northwestern Mutual) to $87.30 (Berkshire Life). The New York *Times* found these figures too insignificant for mention. In fact, it dispensed entirely with the story of that day's hearings.

Few papers overplayed the equally important facts brought out by Dr. Donald Davenport of Harvard on June 12 about the rate of insurance lapses. He showed that a majority of policy-holders are forced to discontinue payment of premiums before they get anything out of their insurance, and that thousands of workers are talked into buying expensive weekly-premium "burial policies" when they should be getting term insurance at half the cost. The New York *Post* set the example of running this story on page one, but its competitors failed to follow. The lobbying didos of the insurance companies—featuring the false propaganda that the Massachusetts system is unsafe and dependent on state subsidies—received more, but not much more, attention.

The T. N. E. C. is, as Johnson fears, piling up a mountain of facts which will cast a shadow over some of the sacrosanct business institutions he tried so hard to please in the days of the NRA. Already its record foreshadows a more reasonable and effective organization of the country's credit institutions, perhaps even their ultimate socialization. But unless Johnson and his fellow-travelers refuse to permit rational readjustments, it certainly does not point to "advanced communism."

Germany vs. Russia in the North

BY JOACHIM JOESTEN

Stockholm, June 3

NORTH EUROPE, which in the World War was a peripheral zone of third-class strategic importance, is today a focal point of military interest. Anyone who has followed the underground preparations made in this area in recent years by Germany and the Soviet Union knows that Europe's "quiet corner" is about to become the main arena for the coming struggle between Nazism and Bolshevism.

Two issues of immense strategic importance have brought about this change. One is the Reich's many times increased dependence on Scandinavian supplies, especially food from Denmark and iron ore from Sweden. The other is the amazing development, from both a military and an economic point of view, of Soviet Russia's Arctic empire.

Meekness is not exactly a Bolshevist quality. That the Red Army can and will fight back if Soviet territory is attacked has been made clear to potential aggressors many times. Now fighting back against Germany means, in the first place, cutting that country off from essential supplies. Hence it can be predicted almost with certainty that Moscow, in the event of war, will seek to stop Swedish ore shipments to Germany—by diplomatic notes or by force of arms.

Before the Great War Germany produced from its own mines more than half of the total amount of iron consumed by its industry. Today, after the loss of Lorraine and other mining districts, the Reich is dependent on foreign supplies for five-sixths of its iron-ore requirements. In 1913 Germany produced 28.6 million tons, and imported 11.4; the corresponding figures for 1937 were 9.6 and 20.6 million tons. The foreign ore, moreover, yields on the average about twice the amount of iron extracted from Germany's domestic ores. And the chief foreign source of ore is Sweden. No less than 9.4 million tons out of the 20.6 imported by the Reich in 1937 came from that country. Actually Sweden, owing to the exceptionally high iron content of its ore (60 to 70 per cent), accounts at the present for 58 per cent of the iron obtained from foreign ores and for 46 per cent of the total German iron consumption.

These figures show what a tremendous blow to the Reich's war potential would be dealt by a Swedish iron-ore embargo. It may be expected therefore that Russia, in the event of Nazi aggression against the Ukraine or any other part of Russian territory, will call on the Swedish government, under the League of Nations Covenant, to stop all ore shipments to the aggressor state. Foreseeing just such a demand, fulfilment of which would inevitably bring war with Germany, Sweden last year served plain notice at Geneva that it does not consider itself any longer bound by Article XVI of the Covenant. Sanctions, Foreign Minister Richard Sandler declared at the League Assembly in September, have lost their compulsory character and will depend in future on the free and sovereign decision of every state. Accordingly one may expect that Sweden, in the event of a German-Russian war, will declare its absolute neutrality and uphold its right to carry on normal trade with belligerents, as it did in 1914-18.

What will happen next is not difficult to foresee. Russia's preparations in the Far North-Italian fishing to secure a ninety-nine-per-cent. Faced with a Swedish

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to the aggressor, Moscow may be expected to demand under threat of force what has been refused under the principle of collective security. If Sweden persists, the Soviets will doubtless proceed to stop the ore traffic on their own. Here we come to one of the fundamental changes in the Far North's strategic position since the last war. Like Britain, Sweden has ceased, owing to the development of air power, to be an insular, or semi-insular, power. During the past years Soviet Russia has built up in the Far North a military force of first-class importance to play havoc at a moment's notice with Sweden's mines and ports, railways, power stations, and ships.

Stalin

Kiruna and Gällivare, the two principal mining centers in Lapland, where the ore comes from; Narvik and Lulea, the export harbors whence it is shipped to Germany. Porjus, gigantic power plant which supplies the mines and railways with electric power, and, last but not least, the famous Iron Ore Line itself, which connects the aforenamed mining towns and export harbors—all these vital centers and strategic points in Swedish Lapland lie within two hours' flight from the Soviet air bases in East Karelia and the Peninsula of Kola—to say nothing of Soviet submarines lurking outside Narvik and Lulea and all along the long sea route from these ports to the German coast.

How Sweden will defend its mining industry and shipping against Soviet raiders on sea and in the air, heaven only knows. To be sure, Boden, a strong Swedish fortress near Lulea, has of late years been equipped with some aircraft. But between Leningrad and the Arctic Ocean the Russians have some twenty known air bases (according to German sources forty-three), of which the most important—Uhtua, Paajarvi, Kantalaks, and the two airports near Murmansk—are well equipped with large hangars. In all, some thousand Soviet airplanes are said to be stationed along the Finnish frontier within easy striking distance of Swedish Lapland.

Moreover, the mining centers in question are extremely vulnerable to attack from the air. Most of the iron ore obtained here does not come from deep-sunk circ[illegible]fts but is simply blasted from the mountainside and Most [illegible]irectly on the rails. The Ore Line itself, on tainly neithe[illegible]wenty trains a day roll to Narvik, and four ever, extravagant a[illegible], with its many tunnels, bridges, viaway, and if it probably [illegible]n ideal objective for air raiders.

Finally, there is another consideration of great and increasing strategic importance. Soviet Russia, as all the world knows, is foremost in the training of parachute infantry, a new and terrible arm for which one hardly could find a better field of operations than the immense, thinly populated, and ill-defended wilderness of the Finno-Scandian *calotte* (a new term applied to the Finnish, Swedish, and Norwegian Lapland zones taken as a strategic unit).

Shall we then, in the event of a German-Russian war, see a Red army descend from the skies on to northern Sweden's mining towns and harbors? The question is seriously discusssed in Scandinavian military circles, where today the opinion prevails that Germany, in any event, is not likely to get many more shipments of Swedish ore after the outbreak of hostilities. For not only do a majority of the Swedish people disapprove of any aid given to aggressors, but Kiruna, of all Swedish towns, has the biggest percentage of Communists. In the Norwegian town of Narvik they are similarly strong. In both these most important centers of the iron-ore traffic, then, popular sentiment is sure to run strongly against the Nazis and for the defense of Soviet Russia. And that has a military significance too.

Under such conditions the policy of absolute neutrality which the Swedish government now pursues may well prove a practical impossibility once war has begun. With Germany clamoring for ore and rattling the saber, and with Soviet fliers circling menacingly over Kiruna, the situation will look to the men in Stockholm like Scylla and Charybdis. I do not pretend to know, probably no one knows, what they will do in such a plight. Faced with the ineluctable alternative—Hitler or Stalin?—the Swedish people would doubtless find the Bolsheviks the lesser evil, while the vested interests, especially in the iron-ore industry, may be counted on to prefer the Nazis. In the end, it might mean civil war.

And Sweden would not be the only Nordic country to be engulfed, well-nigh inescapably, in the maelstrom of a German-Russian war. Norway, Finland, Denmark—none of them would meet a better fate.

That Denmark is already virtually controlled from Berlin is not much of a secret any longer. In the event of a war involving also Britain—against Germany—it would be lost beyond redemption. But in a clash between Nazis and Bolsheviks alone it might get off with a black eye—provided, naturally, it does exactly what it is told to do by Herr Hitler. That would mean, in the first place, closing the Belts and the Sound hermetically to Russian shipping, while allowing Nazi ships to sail in and out as they pleased. It would also mean, undoubtedly, the loss of Bornholm, a highly strategic Danish island in the Baltic which the Nazis are already preparing to turn into an outpost and naval base against the Soviets. Still, Denmark will be happy if it is not forced to give up more;

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and if the Bolsheviks can be kept off without shooting.

Finland is a different story; no one in that country really believes it will be able to keep out of a German-Russian war. People do believe they will be able to in Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Oslo. Despite the efforts of the present moderate government—from which Foreign Minister Rudolf Holsti was expelled last November under direct pressure from Berlin—the Finnish army, which is traditionally tied up with the Reichswehr, the reactionary "Protective Guards," and the Nazi-ridden Lappo movement, would doubtless succeed in bringing the country into line with Hitler's aggressive designs. To get at the Soviet air bases in East Karelia, Hitler must be allowed to "borrow" a long stretch of Finnish boundary; for his drive to Leningrad he needs Viborg and the Aland Islands; and Petsamo, Finland's ice-free Arctic port, would be a springboard toward Murmansk.

This is also where Norway comes into the picture. It may be that the mainland of that country, that is, the fertile, industrious, and densely populated south, could keep aloof from a Baltic war, provided Great Britain were no partner in it. But Norway's northernmost tip, chilly, arid Finmark, can hardly escape being involved, to say nothing of Narvik, which is the chief export harbor for the Swedish iron ore.

That not only the Baltic Sea but also the Arctic Ocean will instantly become the theater of a titanic struggle if ever shots are fired on the Ukrainian plains is clear. Consider Russia's sea communications with the West. Except for a small strip of Baltic coastline, on which is situated Leningrad, it has only the Black Sea—and the Arctic Ocean. There can be no doubt, especially after Montreux, that the Mediterranean would in war be extremely unsafe, if open at all, for the Soviet fleet. And with the Baltic states in the Nazis' grip and Finland an accomplice, it is a good guess that the Red fleet would find itself very soon bottled up at Kronstadt. Anyway it is practically sure that no Russian ship, merchantman or warship, would be allowed to slip through the Belts and the Sound.

Only in the Far North would there be freedom of action. Thanks to the Gulf Stream, of which a stray current warms the Finno-Scandian *calotte* to the point of keeping the coast free of ice all the year round, Russia has here a back door to the wide world. Of all the waters that wash the Russian colossus, only the Arctic Ocean is free, so far, from enemy fleets. That is why the Soviets have been so busy in recent years establishing at Murmansk a naval base which will soon take precedence of Kronstadt, Sebastopol, and Vladivostok.

The idea of turning a desolate fishing village on Kola's bleak and arid coast into a modern center of military and commercial activity was born of sheer necessity. Toward the end of the Great War the czarist government, short of supplies and ammunition, built at immense cost of life a railway line destined to connect Petrograd with Murmansk, where shipments from the Allies were expected to arrive. The line was completed late in 1917, but before it could be made to serve its purpose the czarist empire collapsed. After the revolution both Germany and the Allies had an eye on Murmansk; in the summer of 1918 an inter-Allied expeditionary force was landed there with intent to march on Leningrad; but in the end nothing came of it, and after a while Murmansk was again a half-forgotten dreary little place.

Fifteen years or so ago Murmansk still numbered no more than 2,500 inhabitants. But then began an amazing development which is still in full progress. Today the town is a prosperous center with a population of 100,000, vast modern dockyards, storehouses, repair shops, and administrative buildings. A dual well-kept system of communications connects it with Leningrad. The 1,451-kilometer-long Murman Railway has been enlarged, double-tracked, and partially electrified, and a newly built waterway, open for six months of the year, runs parallel to it. This is the Baltic–White Sea Canal, "Russia's Kiel Canal," completed in 1933. A complex system connecting Leningrad, via the River Svir and Lake Onega, with the White Sea ports of Soroki and Archangel, it has shortened the sea route from Leningrad to Archangel by more than 2,000 sea miles—from 2,840, round the North Cape, to 674. By means of this all-Russian waterway the Soviets are now in a position quickly to switch submarines, destroyers, and even light cruisers from Kronstadt to Murmansk and vice versa.

Kola Bay is seventy kilometers long and Murmansk lies about halfway from the entrance, which is guarded by the strongly fortified naval base of Poljarnoe (Alexandrovsk), where some twenty-five destroyers and fifteen submarines are permanently stationed. But for the stormy character of the Murman coast, Murmansk-Poljarnoe would be considered an ideal naval base: the water is deep and ice-free all the year, and the approaches are easy to defend.

If Hitler wants to strike with success at this Russian stronghold in the Arctic—and there are plenty of indications that he intends to—he must have a proper naval base somewhere up in these latitudes. Actually the Nazis have in recent years made at least half a dozen attempts to get a foothold here. The usual way is to approach the government of a nearby country—Finland or Norway—for permission to set up a "trawler station," to be later secretly converted into a submarine and air base. First they tried Norway; in October, 1936, Tromsö, Hammerfest, and Masöy were inspected for this pur
by the Reich War Minister, Field Marshal von B
himself. But Norway was adamant. After
government, camouflaged as the Ge
company Gismondi, attempted

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year lease for a "fishing station" at Petsamo, from which the distance to Poljarnoe is not more than 100 kilometers as the crow flies. Early in 1938 the Gismondi Company came within an ace of getting its contract, which had already been approved by the Finnish Minister of Agriculture. Then something unexpected happened—a British intervention, they say—and the contract was canceled at the last minute.

But the Nazis were not disheartened by this mishap. Now they are trying Norway again, and if the Oslo government does not give up a "trawler station" in good time, Hitler may be expected to take one by force as soon as a war breaks out. Hence the many unofficial visits of German submarines to Norway's northernmost fjords. During the past year no fewer than thirty-one "mystery submarines" have been spotted in these waters, of which half may have been Russian, the others German. The last incident of this kind occurred on January 26, 1939, when the Nazi U-boat D1 was found by Norwegian fishermen prying around Sörö, near Hammerfest. Meanwhile, the famous "phantom fliers," German and Russian airplanes clandestinely reconnoitering the *calotte,* have this winter resumed operations with increased gusto.

To anyone who cares to study these facts it must be clear that the first shots of the next war, even if they are fired in the Ukraine, will immediately reverberate in the Baltic and the Arctic. Peace is indivisible.

A Report of the Fair

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

I HAVE paid five or six visits to Mr. Whalen's World's Fair, and at the risk of being thought unsophisticated I am abound to report that I enjoyed myself thoroughly. Just to avoid any misunderstanding I had better, however, say right at the beginning that I am temperamentally disposed in favor of such public playgrounds and that I like places where the populace gathers, in Shakespeare's phrase, to walk abroad and recreate itself. Those who do not will probably not like the Fair.

I doubt that Mr. Whalen or anybody else knows much about what the world of tomorrow will be like, and I did not go in order to find out. Neither, for that matter, did I go in search of culture. I went to gape amiably at things intended primarily to be gaped at, and that is by far the best way to go. A World's Fair is a world's *fair.* It is not a collection of museums but a show whose ancestors are the circus, the midway, and the local fair. What distinguishes it from any of these is primarily the stress put upon scientific and industrial wonders, and at Flushing the laboratory and the manufacturing processes are put through their paces in such a way as to make a show. To me the remarkable fact is not that the exhibits are not more "educational" or do not contribute more to a solution of the world's problems, but simply that the showmanship is so good and that science and industry provide spectacles which could easily compete with the acrobats and trained seals of a conventional

[illegible]s.

[illegible] the architecture in the exhibit area is cer- "functional" nor "significant." It is, how- [illegible]d gay in a rather childishly exuberant [illegible]would not repay study it does do its part in creating the festive atmosphere that a fair ought to have. And the grounds are well laid out, beautifully kept, neat, clean, and comfortable. There are plenty of resting places, drinking fountains, and toilets. The talk about the difficulty of getting food at reasonable prices is probably either Bolshevist or Nazi propaganda and should be investigated by the Dies committee. The elegant and rather expensive restaurants operated by foreign governments in their own buildings are usually so crowded that you cannot get in anyway unless you have made reservations in advance. But the casual and less affluent visitor will not starve. There are innumerable eating places ranging from the many hot-dog and hamburger stands operated by Childs—I can testify that the hamburgers are good and uncontaminated by onions—to regular restaurants where both the food and the prices are approximately those found in the better popular-priced restaurants in the neighborhood of *The Nation* office.

The Fair is so large that unless the visitor prefers to wander about casually taking pot luck he had best first make a circular tour in one of the trains of trailer cars (25 cents) and then seek out directly those exhibits he has decided are most likely to interest him. And unless he is insatiable he might as well avoid most of the buildings given large inclusive titles like "Food," "Communications," "Home Furnishings," "Consumers," and the like. For the most part they house chiefly a collection of booths in which merchants exhibit their wares. Many of the buildings of the various foreign nations are elaborate, beautiful, and interesting. But to me by far the best and most exciting exhibits are those offered by the great industries—notably General Electric, West-

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inghouse, Eastman Kodak, American Telephone and Telegraph, General Motors, Ford, and Firestone. All these are free, but "Democracity" in the Perisphere, which nearly everybody visits, costs a quarter and is relatively unimpressive. When I was last there, the projectors which were supposed to contribute very largely to the show by some sort of a cinematographic device had for some reason not been put into operation.

The most popular exhibit seems to be the "Futurama" designed by Bel-Geddes for General Motors. You will certainly have to wait a while in line to get in. When you do you will sit in comfortable moving chairs, each provided with a radio soft-speaker which explains a prodigious diorama—said to be one-third of a mile long—presenting a large section of country as it might be if laid out according to a perfect scheme and traversed by perfect highways. There are cities, towns, factories, farms, parks, mountain resorts, and so on. The whole thing is very elaborately and very successfully carried out.

Nevertheless, to me the most exciting and impressive of all the spectacles is General Electric's "man-made lightning," housed in a beautifully simple copper-sheathed building called Steinmetz Hall. The show lasts only a few minutes, and it is simply a few bolts of lightning—the greatest being thirty feet of blazing, crashing energy at a tension of ten million volts, which, incidentally, is said to be the greatest ever achieved by man. The sense of power which it creates is overwhelming, and I suppose has something to do with the fact that lightning has always seemed typical of nature's might at its most mysterious and most uncontrollable. General Electric's exhibition seems to me the best symbol I have ever seen of man's control of nature, as well as the best showmanship of the fair—lightning obeying the commands of the ringmaster's whip. I am not sure that the interior of the building, which is almost empty except for the condensers—twelve tall black towers ringed with chromium steel—is not also the most beautiful thing at the Fair. It is simple, austere, and almost terrifyingly purposeful.

Next door to Steinmetz Hall General Electric has a House of Magic in which some of the less alarming wonders of electricity are demonstrated. It is very much worth seeing, as are also Eastman's dazzling projections of photographs flashed simultaneously on a series of huge screens arranged in an arc some 180 feet long, American Telephone and Telegraph's mechanical voice which speaks whole sentences built up out of the fundamental vowel and consonant sounds produced by the manipulation of keys, and some of Westinghouse's various exhibits. Firestone has, among other things, a set of machines which take unvulcanized rubber and produce a complete automobile tire. Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler have, in their respective buildings, exhibits which demonstrate pretty much everything anyone would be likely to want to see in connection with the outside, the inside, or the working of a car.

The art exhibits and the other "cultural" exhibits I shall leave to specialists. I doubt that a fair provides the best atmosphere for the propagation of culture in the more conventional sense of the word, and I am not sure that it ought to try. Messrs. Barnum and Bailey were never criticized for not hanging any old masters in their menagerie. If the Fair is more than a circus, that is because, as I have already suggested, certain laboratory demonstrations and certain industrial processes make very spectacular shows. And if those offered at the World's Fair do not actually demonstrate what the world of tomorrow will be like or solve all the difficulties inherent in the job of getting the kind of world we want, they do give a tremendous demonstration of the triumphs of mere technique. In fact, I hardly see how a more tremendous one could be given.

I have not given the Amusement Area a very thorough investigation, but I have wandered through it and visited a few of the many side-shows offered to the public in exchange for sums ranging from 15 to 40 cents. The stupendousness of Billy Rose's Aquacade I have so far taken on faith, but most spectators like it. One of the best of the other elaborate enterprises is Sun Valley, a wood and plaster reconstruction of a Swiss village on a large scale. This has a pleasant cafe and a very pretty exhibition of skating on real ice, as well as impressive ski jumps by various experts on some sort of artificial slide that looks terrifying enough. There are also a certain number of Coney Island "rides" and a parachute jump from a tower 250 feet high. Also there are a number of nude shows for those who can take pleasure in these Barmecide feasts.

My libido did not carry me through all of them, and some are said to be mere country-fair swindles, but one which I did see, Bel-Geddes's Crystal Lassies, is rather ingenious and does fully provide what it promises. One stands on a platform just outside a huge crystal polygon while nude dancers, deliriously multiplied by reflection, dance on the mirror floors. The girls are young and pretty, one of them wears absolutely nothing except one gardenia, and they dance—if not remarkably—at least pleasantly. While I was there one extremely respectable middle-aged lady said defensively to the other equally respectable middle-aged lady who was with her: "Well it's art. You see the same thing in art, don't you?" There is doubtless something in that. Perhaps I was not made a better man, but I don't feel any the worse for the experience, and Mayor LaGuardia will get no protests from me, though it was reported in the newspapers that Gene Tunney was visibly displeased. Probably he went straight to the abbreviated performance of Shakespeare's plays given under the direction of Margaret Webster in "Merrie England."

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Chamberlain by Default

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

London, June 5

THE maximum legal term of the present British Parliament does not expire until November, 1940, but barring new international crises, it is in the cards that the National Government will seek a new mandate from the electors in the coming fall. I do not know how good its experts rate its chances. At first sight they would appear to be slim. Under three different Premiers the government has now been in power almost eight years, and after such a term it cannot help suffering from the natural swing of the political pendulum. Moreover, it has been a conspicuously unsuccessful government. During most of its years of office foreign policy has been the dominant issue, and almost every step it has taken in this field has proved disastrous. Mr. Chamberlain's momentary popularity after Munich has evaporated under the burning sun of Nazi ambitions, and now public opinion and the logic of events are forcing him to reverse himself and adopt measures which he once scornfully rejected. From the point of view of administration also, the government has been a failure. In carrying out the rearmament program and particularly in the field of home defense it has been guilty of inefficiency and waste.

Despite all this there can be little doubt that in a general election the government, though it would lose a good many constituencies, would still retain a comfortable majority. Experienced Labor Party officials have admitted to me that they see little chance of electing more than sixty or seventy additional members. In order to obtain a working majority in the Commons, without relying on Liberal support, a gain of 150 would be necessary. Hence, unless events during the next few months produce a tidal wave of opinion not merely *against* the National Government but *for* Labor, the possibility of another long period of Chamberlainism has to be faced. It is this dismal prospect which has provided the steam for the Popular Front movement so decisively rejected by the recent conference of the Labor Party at Southport. Unless the National Government could be defeated, Sir Stafford Cripps and his followers argued, British democracy was threatened with destruction by both internal and external enemies. In this situation they called for a temporary alliance with other parties, such as the Liberals and the Communists, on the basis of an agreed program of collective action in support of peace abroad and social reform at home.

The defeat of this policy at the conference cannot be ascribed to unfair manipulations by the party executive. It has at times adopted steam-roller tactics, but in this instance it could safely afford to give the proponents of the Popular Front every facility for putting their case, in the certainty that they would be roundly beaten. Standing orders were suspended by the conference so that Sir Stafford Cripps could be heard in his own defense before his expulsion was ratified. He was given a fair hearing, as were his supporters, but on this matter, as well as on every other involving an issue between the executive and the "rebels," the general trend of feeling was unmistakable.

After listening attentively to the debates and talking to delegates of all views in the lobbies, I am convinced that, quite aside from the merits of the Popular Front proposal, Sir Stafford Cripps made a major error in tactics. At the beginning of this year he sent the secretary of the party a memorandum embodying his plan, with a request for a special meeting of the executive, of which he was a member, for its consideration. The meeting was duly held a few days later, and after a discussion which continued until late in the evening a motion to adopt the memorandum was defeated by seven to three. By the first mail next morning leading members of the party and many of its constituent organizations received copies of the memorandum, together with a covering letter from Cripps asking for support. Clearly everything had been put in train in anticipation of the executive's action.

Cripps's impatience, his characteristic intolerance of any obstacle to the carrying out of a policy in which he believed devoutly, had betrayed him. The executive took the view that independent action of this kind by one of its members to overthrow a carefully considered decision was an intolerable breach of discipline. Certainly it was the kind of action that the Communist Party, which has been ardently supporting Cripps, would not permit for an instance from one of its members. Nor was it the only course open to him. Had he resigned from the executive and circulated a personal explanation to the party setting forth his views, he would have been within his rights and could then have carried on an agitation inside the party with a view to getting his proposals adopted at the forthcoming conference. As it was, having blundered into a position which practically forced the executive to expel him unless he recanted, he went on to increase his offense in the eyes of most of his fellow-members by carrying on from the outside, with the aid and sympathy of other organizations, a campaign designed to change the existing policy

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and leadership of the party. Under these circumstances it was a foregone conclusion that the conference would vote him down.

To say that Cripps's tactics were bad is not to say that the policy which he wanted the party to adopt was wrong. It was based on the assumption that the overwhelming need of the hour was the preservation of democracy. If this were lost the Labor Party might find itself discussing the importance of party independence behind barbed wire. The Popular Frontists did not suggest the renunciation of Labor's socialist program. But they urged that the immediate and urgent task was the substitution of a government which could be relied on to oppose fascism for one which had proved weak, reactionary, and inefficient. Against the latter kind "the defense of democracy" has a much wider appeal than a policy of socialist reconstruction. Moreover, the Liberal Party, though but a rump which can never aspire again to an independent majority in Parliament, still has a hold on certain rural and middle-class areas where Labor has never been able to make much headway. The electoral possibilities of a Popular Front in such districts is well illustrated by the Bridgewater by-election last November. Here, in a constituency where Labor had never come within sight of victory, Vernon Bartlett, standing as an independent with the support of all progressive groups, rallied an astonishing number of voters and beat the government candidate handsomely.

At the next general election a Popular Front might have led to many such triumphs. Nevertheless, when the Labor Party conference came to a direct vote on this question, it defeated the proposal even more emphatically than it upheld the expulsion of Cripps. Was this because of a blind clinging to tradition? Or was it due to sheep-like acceptance of a tired and unimaginative leadership? There may be elements of truth in both suggestions, but neither forms an adequate explanation.

Independence is more than a shibboleth in the Labor Party; it is the essence of its being. Prior to the formation of the Labor Party in 1901, the British working classes had sought to achieve political influence through the Liberal Party, under whose auspices a handful of trade-union leaders entered Parliament. This arrangement proved profoundly unsatisfactory as the workers grew to greater social and political consciousness. Hence the Labor Party was founded on the basis of complete political independence. It has not always stuck to that path, but whenever it has wandered, it has come to grief. Its latest experience of collaboration with the Liberals was in 1929-31, when the second Labor government depended perforce on Liberal votes to retain office. The upshot was the formation of the National Government when the late Ramsay MacDonald decided that a national emergency justified an alliance not merely with the Liberals but with the Tories. That defection, fortunately, did not split the Labor Party, but it did give it a shock from which it has not yet fully recovered.

With all this so well remembered, it is not surprising that proposals for political marriages, even though they are intended to be only of the companionate variety, should be regarded with deep suspicion. At the conference this suspicion was intensified by the belief that the Popular Front was a product of middle-class intellectualism. Certainly the bulk of its support came from party locals in the London suburbs and the southern rural areas, where a considerable part of the membership is middle-class. Delegates from the great industrial areas, where party traditions are most deeply imbedded, almost unanimously voted against it. Representing workers born and bred to class solidarity, they could not as easily reconcile themselves to collaboration with capitalist parties as could the more radical intellectuals.

If Cripps had understood the rank and file of the party better he would not have come such a cropper. His difficulty is that he has had no experience as a humble party worker. He was in his thirties when he became a member, and as a man who had already won a brilliant reputation as a lawyer, he was a star from the beginning. Thus his approach was that of the man on the platform who stirs an audience to enthusiasm. Had he climbed the party ladder from the bottom he might more easily have accommodated himself to those aspects of democratic politics which are apt to irk men with exceptional minds; he might have learned patience with the slow and sometimes tortuous courses by which decisions are finally reached and acceptance of those processes of give and take without which there must be either deadlock or dictatorship. For all this, Cripps is a man of rare gifts and complete sincerity who could be an asset to the party. It is to be hoped that the newly elected Executive Committee will accept the applications for reinstatement with which he and those expelled for supporting him acknowledged defeat.

I expressed earlier the opinion, and it was not merely a personal one, that under present circumstances the Labor Party can have few hopes of defeating the National Government. It is true that in the course of the Southport conference Arthur Greenwood and other leaders stoutly repudiated this view as unwarranted defeatism. Yet there is a lingering suspicion among the general public that the party not only cannot win but, worse still, has not the will to win. The impression has spread that at least some Labor leaders would rather play the part of His Majesty's opposition than that of His Majesty's government. There is a belief that they shrink from the responsibility of power in these troubled times, that they doubt their capacity to cope with the fierce resistance certain to be met by a Labor government which tried to carry out its program.

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Such doubts may explain the apathy which has been so marked a feature of recent by-elections. The electors seem reluctant to vote either for the government or for the Labor Party. Yet it would not do to assume a lack of interest in politics, for everywhere there are signs of an intense preoccupation with public affairs and particularly with foreign policy. If this interest is not reflected in by-elections, it must be because the electorate is in a quandary. It cannot express confidence in Chamberlain, but Labor seems to offer no real alternative.

Having rejected the Cripps policy, the Labor Party leadership must now prove its contention that the party can win on its own. To do this it will have to develop a great deal more imagination and energy than it has recently exhibited. More particularly it ought to find ways and means of attracting young people, many of whom are unable to find a political organization expressing their needs and interests. It has over a period of years attempted to build a wing for its younger members, but the League of Labor Youth has had a checkered career. In combating the natural tendency of youngsters to kick over the traces, the party executive has sternly adopted the line that children should be seen but not heard and applied heavy-handed discipline. Party officialdom is all too inclined to blame "corrupting influences" for all outbreaks; it would be better to inquire why the tactics and policy of the party have failed in their appeal to the young. It might even be worth while to take a few leaves from the book of the Communists, who by drive and drama have made the most of their comparatively minute membership.

What the Labor Party needs now above all else is a more vigorous leadership in Parliament. I hesitate to report the current criticism of C. R. Attlee, the present leader, with whom I have long been on friendly terms, and who, moreover, is a sick man. But there is no denying that he has not proved effective in this position. He is well liked personally and well-meaning, but he lacks resolution, and his speeches are notable for bark rather than bite. His accession to the leadership was really due to the accident suffered by George Lansbury, who headed the Parliamentary party after the débâcle of 1931. Lansbury actually asked Cripps to deputize for him while he was in hospital, but Cripps was immersed in legal work and declined. Lansbury's recovery was slow, and Attlee consequently remained in command for some months, and was elected to the leadership. At the 1935 general election the party was much strengthened, and many former front-bench men came back. Attlee, Herbert Morrison, and Arthur Greenwood were all nominated for the leadership; and the first vote was indecisive. Then a group of trade unionists who had supported Greenwood and who were determined not to have Morrison threw their strength to Attlee.

There now seems to be a growing feeling inside the party that Morrison would make a far more effective leader. He has been brilliantly successful both as organizer of the party in London, once very barren ground but now a Labor stronghold, and as head of the Labor majority on the London County Council. He has administrative ability of a high order, he has more than a little pugnacity, and he sticks to his guns. There can be little doubt that under his leadership the Labor opposition in Parliament would cause Mr. Chamberlain a lot more worry than it does at present. But unless Attlee resigns there seems little chance that Morrison will get the job, at least until after the next general election. Meanwhile, lacking leadership capable of demonstrating to the country that it is both able and anxious to form an alternative government, the Labor Party seems likely to fumble an unparalleled opportunity.

Pocket Guide

THIS is the last piece in this series for consumers. Three recent conferences, all announced as for "the consumer," show how that poor, abused word is being overworked. One of the conferences made page one of the newspapers, the second was buried inside, the third was not even mentioned in any large city paper.

The conference that made page one was that of the National Association of Better Business Bureaus, held in Buffalo. Better Business Bureaus exist in every important city and town in the country. In some cities they have been competent in fighting fake stock sales; in others they have got after many little back-street dealers with lying signs in their windows. In checking up on the big merchants and the big advertisers they have not been so competent or so energetic. This conference, as reported in the New York *Herald Tribune,* had the headline, "Better Business Bureau Plans to Extend Services." Well, it will have to do a lot of extending before it bumps into any such advertiser as Ford or any such department store as Wanamaker's.

I wouldn't if I were you, expect to have many of my consumer problems solved by a Better Business Bureau; but if you have bought a pair of shoes that don't fit and can get no satisfaction from the store, you might call up your local bureau. It will help you.

The Consumer Education Conference held at Stevens College in Columbia, Missouri, which was buried in the back pages of most newspapers, should have been, from any news point of view, on page one. I confess that when I first heard about it I was pessimistic. Some time ago Alfred P. Sloan, chairman of the board of General Motors, set aside a large sum of money for a Consumers' Foundation. This was to be run by his brother, Harold Sloan. Why, I thought, should Mr. Sloan be worried about your pocketbook and mine? Was his purpose really a social one? Was he starting one of those organizations I wrote about in my last piece which give aid to consumers on everything except the backer's own product?

But the conference was a pleasant surprise. It was ably arranged and conducted by John M. Cassels, with the assist-

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ance of Helen Dallas. More than 600 business men, educators, and government officials were present. The business leaders were "singularly meek and confessed their sins," according to one reporter. "One representative even hinted that most of the material sent into the schools, masquerading as consumer education, should be taken out. An executive pointed out that only as consumers organize into a pressure group can they secure what they want."

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation has made a good beginning. We'll have to watch it and see how it continues. I hear that pressure has been applied to both the Sloan brothers. Business and advertising are working hard on them. So far they've been deaf to all of it.

The conference that didn't draw a line in any big-city newspaper was a meeting organized by the Cooperative League in Akron, Ohio. Without great fuss or expense labor-union, farm, and cooperative delegates met to do something about their own buying. In simple words Murray Lincoln, secretary of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, dramatized the story. "One-half the farm problem," he said, "is in the cities. One-half of the city problem is in the country." Not much was accomplished at the meeting, but the getting together of farmers, organized labor, and co-ops was a good sign.

Here is another example of the use of the word "consumer" as a front. In 1937 a man named Albert Lane published *Consumer Preferences;* in 1938 he brought out *Consumers' Bureau Reports;* and in 1939 he published *Consumers' Bureau Guide.* Consumers Union brought suit against him, and a judgment written by Justice Cotillo in New York restrained Mr. Lane from using the name *Consumers' Bureau Reports.*

Consumers Union complained that the use of a title so like its Consumers Union *Reports* might cause people to buy one for the other. It also charged that Mr. Lane was lifting Consumers Union material without credit or permission, and stated further to the court that its investigation had disclosed Mr. Lane's Bureau of Standards to be much less authoritative than it purported to be. Mr. Lane was not only the Board of Directors, but the entire staff of his Bureau of Standards. Manufacturers, it charged, were being asked to buy *Consumers' Bureau Reports* on the basis of their ratings in it.

Soon after Justice Cotillo's decision, the Federal Trade Commission filed a complaint because it feared that Mr. Lane's Bureau of Standards might be confused with the National Bureau of Standards of the Department of Commerce. The FTC repeated CU's accusations and added more. The purpose of Mr. Lane's Bureau of Standards, it said, "in selling and distributing these publications, is not to inform, protect, or advise the consuming public, but to induce the manufacturers and producers whose products are listed in the publications to purchase large numbers of said publications in consideration of respondent's so listing their articles and products. . . ." HELEN WOODWARD

[*This is the last appearance of Helen Woodward's Pocket Guide. In the future matters of interest to "consumers" will be handled in frequent articles by Mrs. Woodward and other authorities in specific fields.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

In the Wind

GERMAN RAILROADS have issued new time-tables which list Danzig as German territory.

IS THE Dies committee protecting Senator Reynolds? Several weeks ago this column reported that George Deatherage was sending out Reynolds's speeches in envelopes bearing the Senator's frank. Our informant was questioned by a Dies committee investigator and supplied a good deal of data on Deatherage's activities. When Deatherage took the stand he was questioned about these disclosures—but not about his link with Reynolds.

WHILE THE King and Queen were in Canada they visited the mines at Sudbury owned by the International Nickel Company. They were accompanied by the usual corps of British correspondents. But when they went down into one of the mines, the newspapermen weren't permitted to go along. Prime Minister Mackenzie King made a special plea for the reporters, but officials of the company insisted that the company "objected to newspapermen."

AS PART of a drive to keep Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath" off the screen, Hearst's Los Angeles *Examiner* featured a long blast from a Catholic priest who called the book "communistic" and "lecherous." Since it is well known in Hollywood that Catholic pressure has killed more than one film idea, the importance of this attack is not being underrated.

HEADLINE IN the Boston *Record:* "King Hurts Hand; Raps Dictators."

THE FULL story behind Hitler's March ultimatum to Rumania, which precipitated the formation of the anti-aggression bloc, has just leaked out in London. Its hero is known simply as "Herr Schmidt of Vienna." Formerly an employee of the Austrian legation in Bucharest, Schmidt was retained in the foreign service when the Nazis took over. He concealed his anti-Nazi feelings, biding his time. At last he learned the news that Berlin most wanted kept secret—the terms of the impending ultimatum to Rumania. Several hours before it was to be delivered, Schmidt told all to Rumanian officials. They told Paris and London. A sudden coup was made impossible, the ultimatum was modified, and the basis of the anti-aggression front was laid. Herr Schmidt of Vienna was given a revolver by the German secret service and killed himself.

TRAVEL DEPARTMENT: Travelers arriving in Bermuda these days get a glowing booklet designed to make them feel at home. It boasts: "Bermuda is not a democracy. Less than 10 per cent of its citizens can vote. Only adult males, owning £60 of land, have the suffrage. Non-voters accept and respect this system because it works well and guards against participation by uneducated, irresponsible, or dissatisfied elements. . . . Life is indeed serene in these islands."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Puerto Rico S.O.S.

TWO events have again focused attention upon Puerto Rico: the President's sudden appointment of Admiral William D. Leahy to succeed Major General Winship as governor, and the drafting of a memorandum by a joint committee of the Legislature of Puerto Rico asking for statehood, or, failing statehood, the right to elect a governor in 1940, and for other reforms. Somewhat earlier, on March 12, an economic conference of 300 persons voted to demand of Congress an immediate referendum on the future political status of the island. This conference was called by conservative business interests with the approval of the ultra-conservative Governor Winship, and I am inclined to think was of even greater significance than the two more recent happenings. Two years ago when Senator Tydings introduced a bill providing for a plebiscite on the question of independence, he was roundly denounced both here and in Puerto Rico. The big business men of the island, notably the sugar barons, who have much at stake, were particularly outraged by the suggestion. Yet at the March conference they themselves went on record as being willing to submit the political fate of the island to the Puerto Ricans whom they have so often described as backward and in need of complete tutelage. When the resolution was adopted, so many people were standing and cheering that no formal vote was taken. Men of all shades of opinion demanded that the Puerto Rican people be allowed to determine their future by a plebiscite.

The appointment of Admiral Leahy, however, was a more sensational step, and it was promptly protested by the Committee on Fair Play for Puerto Rico of the American Civil Liberties Union. This action was taken not because of any personal objection to Admiral Leahy but because he is a naval officer who has spent forty-five years in the service, who does not speak Spanish, and who, never having been stationed in Puerto Rico, is necessarily ignorant of the temperament and cultural background of the people. Certainly Admiral Leahy did not seek the job; he was picked for it by the President after they had been cruising together in the Caribbean. Presumably Mr. Roosevelt has been greatly impressed by the Admiral's success in obtaining unprecedentedly large appropriations for the navy; and it is by no means impossible that since Puerto Rico is now to have a large air base as part of our defense against Hitler in the Caribbean, the President thought it would do no harm to have it known in Berlin that an admiral had been put in charge of the island.

It is reported in Washington that nobody in the Interior Department except Mr. Ickes himself knew about the appointment in advance. Some of the highest officials have admitted to me that the principle of appointing a military or naval officer to Puerto Rico, and our other insular possessions, is wrong. It at once arouses antagonism to the new governor by intensifying the feeling of the natives that Washington does not consider the island an integral part of the United States and on the road to statehood but merely a military satrapy. Moreover, the Puerto Ricans feel that they ought to be governed by a Puerto Rican, or by someone who has specialized in Latin American problems and is known to be entirely sympathetic with their plight and their aspirations. As the New York *Times* reported, the appointment of Admiral Leahy without any suggestion from the President to the leaders of the island that there was to be a change or any consultation with them made a very bad impression, which has not been diminished by the current rumors that the Admiral will never go to Puerto Rico but will enter the Cabinet as Secretary of the Navy.

To all this the reply in Washington is that while the principle of having a skilled civilian administrator, preferably a Puerto Rican, is the correct one, an exception should be made in the case of Admiral Leahy, who is an extremely able and kindly man and whose very ignorance of Puero Rican conditions will make him eager to take advice. In the talk that I have had with him I gained the distinct impression that he is open-minded and eager to learn. He can do no better than to study the mistakes of General Winship, who would have been removed some time ago if there had not been the attempt to assassinate him. Whether the Admiral will understand the underlying economic evils which threaten dire catastrophe in Puerto Rico, and rule as a civilian would, remains to be seen.

If he is really eager to make a record of achievement that will win the gratitude of nearly two million Puerto Ricans, he could ask for no better opportunity. Never has the situation been so desperate. At the end of the grinding season it is admitted that there will be 200,000 people out of work. Allowing five people for every worker—none too large when one considers the size of the Puerto Rican family—we shall see close to one million people needing government support. Yet the horrifying fact is that Congress has appropriated only

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$6,000,000 for relief. Secretary Ickes and the officials of the Bureau of Insular Affairs have done everything possible to arouse Congress to the need, but in vain. The President has not helped. I cannot understand why he has not sent a special message to Congress about it or made a radio appeal for justice to our wards. With a million lives at stake and grave disorder possible, heroic measures would be justified. The authorities should certainly not be deterred by the fear of exposing conditions to justify the attack of *Das Schwarze Korps*, organ of Hitler's S. S., which declared recently that conditions in the island were another proof of American hypocrisy and that until they are rectified, Roosevelt has no right to lecture Hitler and the other dictators.

There are several reasons for the indifference of Congress to the island's plight. In the first place, Puerto Rico has no adequate spokesman in Washington. If it were a state, it would always have two Senators and at least one Congressman on the job fighting for its rights. It would then be an influential factor in Presidential conventions; the politicians would be compelled to take note of its existence and to woo its vote in the Electoral College. Next, there is the old, never-to-be-eliminated difficulty that most Congressmen know nothing of the island and care less, since the population is Latin and therefore inferior to the lordly Anglo-Saxon race. They disregard the fact that two years before we annexed the island the Puerto Ricans were given by Spain a voice in their own tariff affairs. The Sugar Act of 1937, which embodied the government's effort to scale down sugar production in Cuba, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, the United States proper, and elsewhere in order to adjust supply to demand, cost Puerto Ricans $21,000,000 a year by cutting down the exports allotted to them. But Congress is not moved. Nor as yet can the Maritime Commission be induced to interest itself in the fact that although the Virgin Islands, only ninety miles away, are fortunate in being exempted from the operation of the coastwise-shipping laws, Puerto Rican trade with our continental ports must be carried in American ships. It costs 18 cents more per drum to ship lubricating oil from the United States to Puerto Rico than from the United States to Europe. But for the freight rates the island could do quite a business in exporting silicon and magnesium to the United States. It costs $6 a ton to ship silicon from the island to harbors under the American flag and only $2 to ship a ton from Belgium to New York. The European producers of magnesium can ship a ton to the United States for $3.50; Puerto Rican producers have to pay $14.60. Finally, the Puerto Ricans lay the decrease in the export of grapefruit, from 1,000,000 boxes in 1930 to only 126,000 in 1938, to these same high freight rates.

The United States government could break those shipping rates if it saw fit, for it either owns outright or has a mortgage on almost every ship under the American flag, with the exception of the vessels of a few lines like the Bull Line. But it does not act, and the President has not asked Congress directly to amend the shipping laws so that foreign ships can take a cargo from Puerto Rico to New York as they can now take one from the Virgin Islands. In other words, the existing situation has created a shipping monopoly. It is not surprising that the pro-American Senator Martenas Nadal not long ago made a sensational speech in San Juan in which he declared that it was not worth while for the Senate to meet as long as the United States sent down "a few little millions of red beads to win us over . . . while they destroy all our sources of wealth without providing other sources instead."

Aside from the overcrowding of the island, which is now being energetically grappled with, despite the objection of the Catholic church, by the legal establishment of birth-control clinics, the worst evil remains the concentration of land in the hands of the great sugar companies, in defiance of a law which decrees that no corporation shall own more than 500 acres. That law, never enforced by any American President, is now before the Circuit Court of Appeals and will in due course be carried up to the Supreme Court. If the law is upheld, the drastic changes involved in its enforcement will for a time throw the island into economic confusion. But the government itself realizes that the great hope for the island lies in small holdings, and it is establishing that system on the lands that it has bought in connection with the government-owned and -operated sugar mill, the Centrale Lafayette. This undertaking has paid its way for the last two years and is the especial object of solicitude of the admirable relief administrator of the island, Miles Fairbank, who has won the respect and regard both of the inhabitants and of officials in Washington.

If a vote should come in the island—and if the Congress of the United States pledged itself to allow Puerto Rico to remain within the tariff sphere of the United States—I believe that the vote would be overwhelmingly for independence. But just as we refuse to keep the Philippines within our tariff laws after they become independent, though it would be enormously to our economic advantage to do so, so Congress would cast off Puerto Rico in the most heartless manner if it indicated its desire to go its own way. It cannot survive financially if American markets are closed to it. There remains then only the question of statehood or some kind of dominion status. The latter would be something new under the American sun; few people remember that in 1922 the Campbell bill conferring just such status upon the island was passed by the Senate but lost in the House by one vote. Something must be done to give these people a voice in their government. Something must be done all along the line to save them from disaster and despair.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

THEATER ON THE LEFT

BY CHARLES R. WALKER

I

EUROPE has many times revitalized its traditional culture with radical ideas absorbed from the sphere of politics. The culture of France, always a European barometer, naturalized revolutionary ideas over and over again in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In our time there has been the case of Germany before the coming of Hitler. Most of the distinguished artists and writers of the republic went politically left between the war and 1933. The past six years have somewhat tardily given the United States its first adult experience with this cultural phenomenon. And nowhere have the results been more fruitful, real, or provocative than in the American theater.

Many, many seasons ago—at least five—I discussed with a distinguished producer the plans I had helped to formulate for a workers' theater. He warned me gravely that the fallacy of the left theater lay "in the proved indifference of the great mass of Americans, and especially workingmen, for social themes." "There simply is no audience," he added, "for plays about unemployment, lynching, housing problems, or strikes."

Three years later *Variety* had proclaimed the Theater Union's "Stevedore" a hit, "Waiting for Lefty," a Group production, had been seen by half a million workers, and serious metropolitan critics were comparing Clifford Odets to Shakespeare. By 1936 the WPA was carrying forward on a vastly wider scale—and with a different emphasis—this new American phenomenon of a provocative social theater. How did it all happen, and, more important, what is the status of the so-called left theater today?

In the early thirties there existed in America tiny nucleii of a "proletarian theater" in what their creators called "agit-prop troupes." In the summer of 1932 I witnessed one of their plays performed before an audience of a hundred clothing workers in Brooklyn. It was the story of a cutters' strike. In the middle of the play the actor playing the union organizer turned to the audience: "We aren't actors, we're workers the way you are. This isn't a play. It's life. What are we going to do about it!" The germ of the organizer's speech in "Waiting for Lefty" was there, and the germ—if not the political tone—of "Pins and Needles" as well.

Most of the agit-props were pretty bad, and ideas for "full-length revolutionary plays" and a "professional workers' theater" began to crop up in left circles. In response the Theater Collective was founded, and it earnestly restaged with left variations Paul Sifton's "1931." All of this was a very long time ago—when Hoover was still President, when Germany was still the Weimar Republic, and incidentally when the Communist Party of the United States, with a fifth of its present membership, was still calling for "a revolutionary way out of the crisis," which meant seizure of power and not the reelection of Roosevelt.

Significantly the militant-minded Theater Union began its career in open revolt not only against the "commercialized theater" but against the ideological credo of left theater circles of the day. The New York District of the Communist Party, I remember vividly, summoned two of us who sympathized in the main with the party's political line to answer charges that we were creating a "bourgeois theater." The charge was brought by the Theater Collective and was based on the following counts: (1) that the Union proposed to have Socialists on its executive board; (2) that we intended to pay our actors and other workers—a point that particularly shocked the unpaid volunteers of agit-prop groups; (3) that Sidney Howard was on our advisory board. These and other criticisms were soon to melt away in the unexpected applause that greeted "Peace on Earth" and "Stevedore" from radicals of every persuasion, non-class-conscious workers, and the carriage trade. But even before "Peace on Earth," Earl Browder had said to me in a moment of disarming frankness: "Many of the comrades are impractical and *leftist*. . . . I believe if the Communist Party directly controls the Theater Union you will have interesting debates about plays. If you remain autonomous you may get a theater."

He was certainly right. The audiences which came to support our plays were drawn from organizations unaffiliated with any political party, from trade unions, culture clubs, college students, professional groups, and the general public. Always, however, the followers of the radical parties bought the most seats, and of these the Communists were in a majority. In the theater's management Socialists, Communists, and others—much to everyone's surprise—achieved a working harmony.

"Peace on Earth," produced in November, 1933, was violently attacked by the critics as a bad play and as intolerably propagandist. George Jean Nathan blithely entitled his review: "The Theater Union—a Post-Mortem." As "Peace" continued to play to crowded houses month after month, the critics returned and did a revise. "Stevedore" followed promptly and was proclaimed a hit by

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critics and audience alike. It ran for twenty-three weeks.

The Theater Union had discovered a large untapped audience of left theatergoers and demonstrated that the average American will go to the theater if he can afford it. Theater Union seats cost 30 cents to a dollar, and a majority of the audience were found to have never seen a "stage play" before. Besides providing free tickets for the unemployed, the Union sold huge blocks of seats at a discount to workers' organizations, thus guaranteeing the run of any play for from six to twelve weeks.

Objective aesthetic appraisal of the Union's plays is difficult. They had an unmistakable élan and audience excitement, and to the writer certain moments stand out as unforgettable theatrical experiences: the dock strike in "Peace on Earth," the lolling sunshine scene in "Stevedore," the miner's curse at the end of "Black Pit," and so on. Few Theater Union plays, however, except "Stevedore," achieved the organic theatrical distinction of, say, a Welles revival, or the productions of WPA's "Living Newspaper." This was partly because the Union was pioneering in a new technique but more basically, I believe, because it lacked talent and carried a topheavy load of organizers and playwrights on its governing board.

Meanwhile, something like an ideological revolution, if you remember, was occurring in the acting company of the Group Theater. "Waiting for Lefty," produced casually on a Sunday-night program, became a sensation. It has been played ever since. As "Lefty's" audiences and reputation grew, the Group acting company overruled a reluctant directorate and mounted Odets's "Awake and Sing"—written several years before. And finally in the winter of 1935 the Group blossomed into a double-barreled Odets program, "Awake and Sing" playing simultaneously with the one-acters "Till I Die" and "Lefty."

The Theater Union gave its last play, John Lawson's "Marching Song," in the winter of 1937. In some ways the Union's most skilful script and most finished production, "Marching Song" was yet a disappointment. And though left audiences applauded as loudly as ever, and grieved when the Theater Union, because of financial difficulties, collapsed after the play's run, they had now learned to look for vitality in other quarters. In the same season "Johnny Johnson," produced by the Group, became the most original full-length war play of the decade. I say full-length in deference to "Bury the Dead," Irwin Shaw's one-acter produced by the Actors' Repertory Theater. The Repertory had previously staged Albert Bein's "Let Freedom Ring," and was later to introduce "Two Hundred Were Chosen" and "Washington Jitters."

Though New York, both on Fourteenth Street and Broadway, kept the lead, the left-theater movement spread rapidly through the United States, and by 1935 the New Theater League with offices on Fourteenth Street boasted affiliated groups dedicated to the production of left plays in all the larger cities of the United States. Since the past two years have witnessed a nation-wide resurgence of trade unionism, the growth of a "sitdown circuit" under the auspices of the New Theater League was not unexpected. "Waiting for Lefty" was applauded from automobile bodies in Detroit and elsewhere. The season of 1937-38 saw the birth of the first permanent trade-union theater in the United States—Labor Stage. "Pins and Needles" still shows no signs of having exhausted its potential audience. The Theater Union and the Group had attracted workers of course to their plays, but they had neither the advantages of a 100 per cent trade-union theater nor its limitations.

Six months after the demise of the Theater Union, the Mercury Theater opened with its "artistic triumph and smash hit," "Julius Caesar." Despite, however, the unique gift of Welles and the Mercury in endowing the classics with a new *Weltanschauung*, the most important fact on the cultural left since 1936 has been the inclusion of a social theater in that vast and catholic repertory of entertainment known as the Federal Theater Project. The FTP was a product of the depression, but as Hallie Flanagan insisted, "in its future possibilities for American life and for American art it is no less potent because it carries in the pit of its stomach the remembrance of hunger."

[*Part II of this article, to appear next week, will discuss the work of the Federal Theater Project.*]

Picture of Poland

POLAND: KEY TO EUROPE. By Raymond Leslie Buell. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

AN ENGLISH diplomat was singing the praises of Mr. Chamberlain—even defending the pact of Munich. A young Englishman was among the listeners. At last he said to the diplomat: "But isn't there something very wrong, sir, in Great Britain giving to the Poles what she refused to the Czechs?" "Oh, no, my dear fellow," the diplomat answered at once, "the Poles are awfully decent people. Why, surely you must know the Poniatowskis. I used to shoot with them. Beautiful country place they have. Oh, yes, the Poles are decent people." A pretty instance of that snobbery which was certainly one of the motives that led the real rulers of England and France in the fall of 1938 to hand over to Hitler a genuine democracy with a first-rate army, great industrial resources, and a well-balanced economy!

Now that England and France seem determined to make a stand, intrusting the decision whether they should go to war or not to Poland, we need to know what this Poland is really like. Apart from snobbery, what reasons are there for or against choosing Poland as the point on which to stand and defy Hitler?

Just at this moment, along comes Mr. Buell with a book on Poland, and just the kind of book we need. It contains a fascinating history of Poland, a fairly clear picture of modern Poland's political system and of the condition of the Germans, Ukrainians, and Jews, an account of Polish foreign

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Only superlatives can describe this magnificent novel, which the author of *Look Homeward, Angel* and *Of Time and the River* completed before his untimely death. Its love story is one of the most tempestuous and moving in literature. Its writing, its passion and its poetry rank with Wolfe's best. "Full of the joy and zest of life." — WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE. $3.00

JOHN
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With characteristic flashing wit and brilliant insight, the author of *Inside Europe* lifts the lid off the continent of mystery. "The most competent one-man reportorial job ever undertaken."—*N. Y. Herald Tribune "Books"*. "Even more successful than *Inside Europe*. I deem it the plain duty of all . . . citizens to ship east of Suez with Gunther as their dragoman." — CLIFTON FADIMAN, *New Yorker*. $3.50

EDNA ST. VINCENT
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Huntsman, What Quarry?

"Lyric perfection . . . she strikes as ever a lyre of a hundred strings. There is a Chaucerian touch here, the very magic of those eternal lines that open 'Canterbury Tales'." — *N. Y. Times Book Review*. "Each new volume emphasizes the uniqueness of her lyric gift. It stands head, shoulders and lovely body above the verse of other contemporary poets." — LEWIS GANNETT, *N. Y. Herald Tribune*. Cloth, $2.00 Leather, $3.00

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policy since 1919, a chapter on the Polish demand for colonies, and a really masterly analysis of Poland's economic situation. Mr. Buell does well one of the most difficult jobs: he gives foreign readers a clear picture of the mode of life of another people. Whatever happens, this is one of the books every intelligent person will want to have at hand during the coming succession of crises.

Because this book is on the whole so objective and thorough, it is the more strange to find in it one or two misleading statements and odd bits of ill-digested Polish propaganda. "Poland," says Mr. Buell, "can have no confidence in 'guaranty' pacts, such as the Eastern Locarno agreement sponsored by Soviet Russia, in view of the fateful consequences of Catherine II's 'guaranties' in the agreement of 1768," and "Poland remembers that in 1793 . . . it was abandoned by both France and Britain." The memory of these things helps, he says, "to explain why Pilsudski decided in 1934 that Poland could not be tied to either Paris or London." He forgets to add that in 1934 Poland was tied to Hitler's Germany, although in the partitions of Poland the Prussians had grabbed their full share. Again, he tells us that "Poland has already discounted the likelihood of immediate foreign aid in the event of war—which Czechoslovakia counted on up to the very last second." Responsible Czechs never counted on "immediate aid" from France or Great Britain; they did have evidence that the Russians were able and ready to help them. Again, Mr. Buell points out quite truly that "an alliance with Poland would have strengthened Prague's strategic position" and that "this lack of unity among the Slavic states of Central Europe in 1938 contributed to the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia"; but he attributes this lack of unity to the fact that, as far back as 1926, Czechoslovakia had refused an alliance proposed by Poland. This statement is misleading, because Mr. Buell leaves out the vital fact that before Poland made the pact with Hitler in 1934, Hitler had offered to the Czechs a similar pact, which the Czechs refused. They refused it because they did not want to make with Hitler an agreement inconsistent with their engagements to France, and because they wished Poland to be included in any German non-aggression pact. France rewarded the Czechs by deserting them; Poland rewarded them first by double-crossing them in 1934 and then, in 1938, by sharing in the partition. Polish foreign policy is heavily responsible for the present danger to peace.

What practical conclusions does Mr. Buell's book suggest? For giving drastic economic help to Poland he makes out a strong case: Poland's economic situation—a population increasing by nearly half a million every year in an industrially backward country which cannot procure the equipment it needs because of international trade restrictions—is not only a humanitarian problem but a growing danger to world peace. On the other hand, this book offers no adequate basis for thinking that the alliance which Mr. Chamberlain has given to Poland is the way to help either Polish peasants or the cause of peace. It may well do the opposite. The Poles, as Mr. Buell remarks, are obsessed with the fact that Poland once stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The social system is still not far removed from feudalism, and "the gulf separating the lowly peasant from the government official or

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large estate-owner" is "almost as great as that which exists in many tropical countries"—and this is from the author of "The Native Problem in Africa." The rulers of modern Poland have treated their minorities badly and have played a double game in foreign policy. Is this the sort of country to which it was wise to give an unconditional promise of military aid?

JONATHAN GRIFFIN

From Another World

A BOOK OF MIRACLES. By Ben Hecht. Viking Press. $2.75

MR. HECHT has proved his versatility long since with such diverse fare as "The Front Page," "Fantazius Mallare," "1001 Afternoons in Chicago," and "Count Bruga," and now, with a wave of the hand, he builds a commodious two-way bridge between Heaven and Times Square, with a by-pass to Hollywood. The title of this "Book of Miracles" means exactly what it says: these seven stories, some tender and reverent, others acidly satirical, involve God and the heavenly hosts as familiarly as if Mr. Hecht were a sort of ectoplasmic reporter on the *Daily Empyrean.*

There is no introduction, no warning except the titles. With the opening paragraph of the first story you jump right off the edge of the world of every-day, where the air contains nothing more ethereal than dust; or rather, you discover that you have been seeing only the more prosaic manifestations of a world in which spirits still move and have their being: "If you stand motionless for seven hours looking up at the topmost window of the tallest building in New York you will be rewarded, provided you are not too much of a New Yorker, with a curious sight. You will see two Angels hovering there, that is, not outside this topmost window but a little above it."

To tell you what those two angels are doing in such an unlikely spot would spoil one of the most poignant of the book's miraculous tales, A Lost Soul. It is at once sentimental and biting, as any good fable should be. Some of the other stories—The Little Candle, Death of Eleazer, Remember Thy Creator—are more filled with tenderness and deep religious feeling, and there is far sharper bite in The Missing Idol and The Heavenly Choir; but this little parable of Joe Feeney, the two angels, and God is to our present-day world of steel and concrete what some of the Greek nature myths were to a folk who were not too blasé to personify those forces about them which they did not understand.

The Little Candle and Death of Eleazer are modern *contes dévots,* such as the disciples of the medieval church used to marvel at, both because they illustrated the divine goodness and because they appealed to the hearers' love of miracles—like Chaucer's Prioress's Tale. The analogy is further pointed by the fact that the two modern stories both concern the sufferings of the Jews in a world grown more than usually intolerant and hostile, while Chaucer's Prioress told one of those apocryphal tales of Christian martrydom that were circulated in the fourteenth century (and not now?) to inflame public feeling against the Jews.

On the lighter side, The Missing Idol and The Heavenly Choir are hilarious barbs aimed respectively at the movies and

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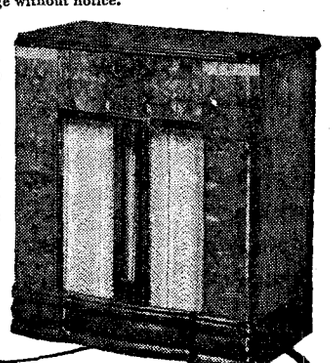

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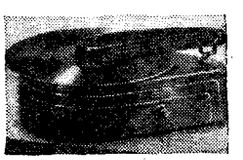

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the radio. Mr. Hecht has had his fling in Hollywood, and he reduces its pretensions and vaporings to absurdity in his amazing tale of the great producer, Mr. Kolisher, "the Man in the Street with bay leaves in his hair," who determined to film a super-epic based on the Passion of Christ. As in the other satirical stories the irony cuts at least two ways, and it would take a daring critic to decide offhand, after finishing the story, just which has come off worst: Mr. Kolisher, the actor Robert Gary, or God. The Heavenly Choir purports to be written some fifteen or twenty years hence, when radio broadcasting has completely disappeared from the earth on account of—but that, again, would be telling. If words were bullets, Mr. Hecht's sonorous salvos would leave the tough fabric of radio advertising looking like a piece of fine old lace after he really lets himself go against the purveyors of overrated cosmetics, cheapened music, and sentimental hooey. He must have sharpened his pen to a needle point, then dipped it in distilled venom.

Except for the long and rather rambling Adventures of Professor Emmett, which tells of an entomologist whose soul was translated into the body of an ant and who managed to warn the President of an approaching termite invasion, you will find every one of the stories in the volume more than worth your time, unless you are one of those mistaken realists who don't like stories of the supernatural even when they are good. These are mature, refreshing additions to Mr. Hecht's already distinguished list of contributions to our imaginative fiction.

LOUIS B. SALOMON

How the Wagner Act Works

THE WORKER, THE FOREMAN, AND THE WAGNER ACT. By Russell L. Greenman. Harper and Brothers. $1.50.

HOW TO DEAL WITH ORGANIZED LABOR. By Alexander Feller and Jacob E. Hurwitz. Alexander Publishing Company. $6.50.

RUSSELL L. GREENMAN, formerly a Chamber of Commerce lawyer and presently engaged in personnel-relations work, has written an interesting little book called "The Worker, the Foreman, and the Wagner Act." The title exactly describes its contents. It consists of dozens of case histories each of which illustrates the obligations and responsibilities of the foreman toward the worker under the National Labor Relations Act. Each case by itself could stand as a well-written short short story. They all add up to Mr. Greenman's conclusion that the foreman has complete freedom to hire and fire, promote and demote, transfer or lay off his employees for any reason under the sun except for their interest or participation in union activities. The author indicates the full extent of the severity of some of the Labor Board's border-line decisions, but underlines the extreme difficulty of its task in determining the motives for the actions of foremen and gives almost as much emphasis to cases in which workers' charges have been dismissed by the board as to those in which the reinstatement of workers has been ordered.

Mr. Greenman concludes with a plea for "fair play over and above the law." His book is of interest because it does

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not come from the political left. He accepts the act and the board's interpretation of it. He represents the point of view of thousands of well-intentioned employers who are willing to abide by the principle of collective bargaining but who need education and experience in its application.

The publication of this book provides an opportunity to comment upon another book about the Labor Relations Act which has been given insufficient notice although it was published eighteen months ago. Alexander Feller and Jacob Hurwitz, lawyers specializing in labor-relations cases, have written a book called "How to Deal with Organized Labor." The book's title and the fact that it is published by a Wall Street firm have conveyed a sinister meaning to those with whom I have discussed it but who have not themselves read it. "How to deal" suggests Hitler's and Chamberlain's relations to Czechoslovakia.

One reason why people have not read the book is that it is as long as it is expensive. Its 630 pages are divided into three parts. The first is a competent survey of the objectives, methods, history, structure, and government of trade unions and trade associations. The authors emphasize the deep-seated character of the urge toward collective bargaining among workers and accept it as a fact which employers must face. They also dwell upon the separation of interests between unions as institutions and their worker-members. Although this can be overdone, it is a matter to which scant attention is paid in the literature of labor.

The second part is devoted to a survey of the background, substance, procedure, administration, and policies of the National Labor Relations Act and Board. The type of cases selected as illustrations, the manner in which they are written up, and the authors' exclusive preoccupation with the formal activities of the board depict it as a harsh and inflexible Jehovah dealing out with a heavy hand an unfamiliar justice. The educational and investigatory work of mediation and conciliation performed by the board in its informal cases remain unmentioned. Why? Is it to stimulate a choral counterpoint to the solos of criticism sung by a small but very vocal minority of employers and publishers?

In Part Three it appears that this is not the authors' motive. Their real object is to make clear to employer-readers that the Wagner Act has teeth in it, that it is here to stay, and that the present board is determined to enforce it. From a perfectly cold-blooded, profit-making point of view the authors obliquely urge employers to accept this estimate of the legal status of collective bargaining and really to *deal* with organized labor in the non-emotional, non-psychopathic manner which they now frequently reserve for other aspects of their business. In 150 pages the authors set forth the details of real dealing from this point of view.

I think this book is important to liberals who want a glimpse into the minds of men interested in making money rather than fighting fetishes; to students who want information not in the ordinary textbooks; to teachers who want to get hold of tough-minded students not to be had on the basis of sentiment; and to employers who want to know how the labor problem adds up on the balance sheet. The book is *not* important, however, as a well-rounded view of the operations of the National Labor Relations Board.

ROBERT R. R. BROOKS

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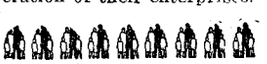

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Painters, French and American

QUEER THING, PAINTING. By Walter Pach. Harper and Brothers. $4.

THESE reminiscences are interesting in so far as they illuminate the American situation at the time the author was coming to maturity. In those years, 1895 to 1907, almost everything was keyed to a thin Whistler-Sargent taste, genteel, pale, unrooted, and fundamentally the obverse of commercialism. It was to Paris that Mr. Pach had to go to get a breath of something different. That year (1907) was in fact particularly stirring: the Cubists were revolting and all the old values were being seriously challenged. Mr. Pach accommodated himself to these revivifying changes and in the process found his function, which was to serve as an intermediary between two cultures, the French and the American. He wrote the first American essay on Cézanne (1908); he translated Elie Faure's five-volume history of art; he did a full-length book on French masters and another called "Ananias"; he published monographs, helped arrange the Armory show, shared direction of the Independents, wrote forewords to catalogues, advised dealers, collectors, and museums, studied painting himself, lectured, and finally, last year, translated Delacroix's journals. All this contributed to America's "coming of age," and we are properly grateful, especially for the two indispensable translations.

The present volume continues this work with a description of the author's contacts with painters such as Picasso, Rouault, Matisse, and Braque. It also discusses Monet and Renoir, and presents collectors, critics, museums, Mexicans, and friends that the author has known. Chapters on the Americans are included, and there are some good documentary pages on the Armory show. All this should be revealing, but it isn't, aside from the helpful chapter on Eakins and Ryder and occasional notes on Matisse, Picasso, and Braque.

More serious, there is a singular and often repeated claim —recurrent in Mr. Pach's previous writings—that the museum is the primary force in art. Parallel to and no doubt responsible for this academic insistence is a lack of response to much of the most living American art during the last thirty years. There is no mention of John Marin, our incomparable water colorist and growingly impressive oil painter. Not a word on Marsden Hartley, who has been exhibiting for thirty years. Complete neglect of Max Weber and Walkowitz. Omission of Eilshemius, Kopman, and Dove. Not a word on "Camera Work." Nothing on the delicate Hartl and the "punctilious" Demuth. Forgotten also is the pathetic Alfred Maurer, our pioneer modern, whose lifelong struggle between the old and the new was resolved only by suicide. Moreover, even about the artists he mentions Mr. Pach is imprecise. He praises John Sloan's unfortunate excursions into cross-hatching and fails to point out that his really priceless contribution lay in his early etchings and his less self-conscious oils. He has the inconceivable blindness to term Glackens "a constant force for renewal in American art." He has less to say for Luks and Davies than for Prendergast. Nor does he relate any of "the Eight" to that vivid and healthy movement which flourished in the *Masses* and the *Liberator*.

In addition, while Mr. Pach gives us notations on three important European collectors and some information on that unique connoisseur and enthusiast, John Quinn, he says nothing about those collectors of today—Duncan Phillips, Samuel A. Lewisohn, and Philip Goodwin, for example—who have constantly encouraged living American painters. Again, he terms J. P. Morgan, Sr., a creative collector. But why, then, did it take Mr. Gellatly—a man now almost forgotten—to support the indigent Ryder? He justly honors Roger Fry and Faure, overrates Meier-Graefe, but ignores Paul Rosenfeld and Henry McBride. Why these omissions?

The answer is that Mr. Pach is not a critic. He is an appreciator and a transmitter of that which has already been accepted. This was a valuable function when America was "unlettered" in art, but it was not a primary one. The primary one, as always, has been carried forward by that passion which expresses itself in paint, by those critics who humbly and devotedly have championed the beautiful thing (Paul Rosenfeld, Lewis Mumford, and Henry McBride), by such fighters as Stieglitz, by generous men such as J. B. Neumann, by teachers like Henri (whom Mr. Pach soundly praises) and Hans Hofmann (whom he overlooks), by social forces like the *Liberator* and the *Masses*, which furthered caricature, liveliness, and political understanding through plastic means, and by the unparalleled mass aesthetic experiment of the WPA. Here has been the great current of the last thirty years in America, and Mr. Pach has, for the most part, missed it. He has been like a good professor who introduced us to the classics, translated them for us, spoke up occasionally for the living men of his own time and place, but chiefly looked to France or to what had been safely ratified by time.

JEROME MELLQUIST

RECORDS

LISTENING repeatedly to the works in Volumes III, IV, V, and VI of H. M. V.'s Haydn Quartet Society, which Victor has issued here (each seven-record volume $14), one appreciates the truth of Tovey's statement about one of the last symphonies—that "Haydn is a great master . . . working on a very small scale." For one is increasingly aware of what Haydn has packed into these quartets—the expressive turns of melody, the surprises in rhythm, phrasing, sonority, the audacities in harmonic progression, with which he tries to hold attention and does hold it from phrase to phrase, from measure to measure, even from beat to beat. These things, occurring sometimes in breath-taking profusion, provide now moving, now delightful moments in fine works like Opus 33 No. 2 in M-525, like Opus 50 No. 3 and Opus 76 No. 3, with the wonderful trio of its superb minuet movement, in M-526, or like Opus 54 No. 3 and Opus 55 No. 1, with its lovely slow movement and another superb minuet, in M-528; and in the even finer Opus 64 No. 6 and Opus 71 No. 1 in M-525. Then there are the masterworks in which the process rises to sheer incandescence—Opus 64 No. 4 in M-528, Opus 20 No. 4, Opus 74 No. 2, and Opus 77 No. 2 in M-527. And in M-526 there is Opus 20 No. 5, most astounding of all in the depth and poignancy of feeling that might be Mozart's,

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with a minuet movement in particular that might have been written by the composer of the extraordinary minuets of the Quintets K. 515 and 516.

With this music, as with any other, the precise degree of the effective realization of its inherent qualities varies with performance. There is that minuet of Opus 20 No. 5 with its poignancy fully achieved in the performance of the Roth Quartet on Columbia; there is the same minuet with this quality lessened by the excessively fast pace of the Pro Arte Quartet's performance in M-526, its less sensitive phrasing. There are Haydn's quartets as they were played by the Budapest Quartet for the New Friends of Music audience: the warm lyricism of the slow movements, the high spirits, playfulness, wit of the other movements brought to incandescence by playing that is itself incandescent in ease of execution, in luminous-toned phrasing, in ensemble. And there are Haydn's quartets as played by the Pro Arte Quartet in these volumes—played correctly, with spirit, and on the whole quite well, but with this group's limitations in technique and musical style, which means that the music proceeds without suppleness, without subtlety, and sometimes with feet that are weighted instead of winged.

Two things make Lionel Hampton's "Sweethearts on Parade" (Victor) outstanding in spite of the minor annoyances of his own playing and singing: the underlying rhythm, and over this the saxophone work of Choo Berry, who plays continuously from the beginning of the record to the end with constantly fresh invention and with a rhythmic incisiveness and sharp outlining of phrases different from his usual amorphous style (if your record is mislabeled look for 26209-B on the wax). Those who like Jess Stacy's piano-playing will like his "Ain't Goin' Nowhere" (Commodore); but I find that I enjoy his solo compositions less than the music his imagination produces when stimulated by the imaginations of others—that is, what he improvises on someone else's tune when playing in a group.

Among further Commodore reissues the best offer the playing of Coleman Hawkins on saxophone and Henry Allen on trumpet in Hawkins's "Heartbreak Blues"; of Benny Carter on clarinet, Jimmy Harrisson on trombone, and Hawkins, among others, in the Chocolate Dandies' "Dee Blues"; of Louis Armstrong, in his brilliant but not yet exhibitionistic 1927 style, and Johnny Dodds on clarinet in Armstrong's "Potato Head Blues" and "Put 'Em Down Blues"; of Frankie Newton on trumpet, Jack Teagarden on trombone, and Berry on saxophone, with Bessie Smith's singing, in "I'm Down in the Dumps." Some may put up with Red McKenzie's kazoo for the playing of Hawkins and of Jimmy Dorsey on clarinet in the Mound City Blue Blowers' "Georgia on My Mind," and for Hawkins again and Muggsy Spanier's delicate work on trumpet behind the vocal in "I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me" on the reverse side. They may also put up with Joe Venuti's violin for the work of Charlie Teagarden on trumpet and Benny Goodman on clarinet in the Venuti-Lang "Some Day, Sweetheart"; and with Billly Banks's singing for the outstanding work of Pee-Wee Russell on clarinet and saxophone, matched occasionally by Allen's on trumpet, in the Rhythmakers' "Who's Sorry Now" and their "Oh! Peter" and "Margie."

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Murder and Propaganda

Dear Sirs: There is published in England a *London Gazette* which nobody reads. But somebody in this country reads it carefully and saw fit to cull from it and "transplant" into the New York *Times* of April 29 a most characteristic piece of Mussolinian propaganda.

The New York *Times* evidently felt the need of informing its readers about two anti-Fascist Italians, Carlo Rosselli and his brother Sabatino, who were murdered in the forest of Couterne near Bagnoles sur l'Orne, France, on June 9, 1937. Here follows the account: "It is believed that Professor Rosselli had given up politics and was preparing to accept a chair at the University of Geneva through the good offices of his friend and fellow-exile Professor Guglielmo Ferrero, the historian, when, accompanied by his brother Sabatino, he made a mysterious visit to Couterne. There both were assassinated. It is believed that Sabatino was killed simply because he had recognized the two assassins, for he was indifferent to politics."

In order to understand the aim of this piece of propaganda, it is important to know that soon after the murder all newspapers affiliated with the Fascist propaganda machine circulated the version that Carlo Rosselli had been about to give up politics and was negotiating with Mussolini, through his brother, the terms of his surrender: in return for betraying the secrets of anti-Fascist activities he was to have been given a teaching position in an Italian university. His anti-Fascist comrades had put him to death before the betrayal was consummated.

All who knew Carlo Rosselli and his brother protested vigorously against this dastardly calumny. Carlo Rosselli had never either given up or planned to give up his anti-Fascist struggle. Carlo's brother Nello, no less than Carlo, was a man of honor, an uncompromising opponent of the Fascist regime, and incapable of acting as a go-between in a betrayal.

Six months after the murder, the French police found out that the two Italians had been murdered by members of the Cagoulards, a French secret organization which was provided with funds and arms by Mussolini's agents. Those Frenchmen had no personal reason to murder two Italians who never had concerned themselves with French political affairs. Their crime can be explained only on the ground that they were obeying orders from those higher up in their organization—orders originating from Mussolini's agents. Carlo Rosselli was one of the staunchest leaders of the anti-Fascist movement among Italians outside Italy. The French Cagoulards were ordered to put him out of the way. One of the Frenchmen who carried out the murder is now living in Italy under Mussolini's protection. The others are under arrest and will be tried in Paris.

Nevertheless, in the version printed by the New York *Times* not a word is to be found about the French Cagoulards or the links which existed between their organization and Mussolini's agents. Here, for the first time, the name of Guglielmo Ferrero is substituted for that of Carlo's brother as the leader of good offices, and therefore Carlo was to have obtained a chair not in Italy but in Geneva; Carlo was not negotiating to give up politics but had already given up politics, and his brother was indifferent to politics. Who, then, could harbor any suspicion that Mussolini's agents had had a hand in the business?

The readers of the New York *Times* have been asked to believe that Carlo's brother "was killed simply because he had recognized the two assassins." This is the last vestige of the earlier invention that the assassins were anti-Fascists who wanted to prevent Carlo from selling them out to Mussolini.

It would be interesting to know through what hands the misstatements of the *London Gazette* have passed to reach the columns of the New York *Times*. It would not be surprising if one of these hands belonged to the same gentleman who, several months ago, altered the text of a letter written by my friend Professor G. A. Borgese before publishing it in the New York *Times* of October 22, 1938. Borgese, speaking in his letter of one of his former students who had been imprisoned in Italy, wrote: "His persecution and ordeal are new signs of the well-known and promising unrest in the Italian new generation." Somebody on the staff of the paper substituted for the word "promising" in Borgese's letter the word "troubling." He was thereby doing his utmost not to provoke the displeasure of his Fascist comrades.

GAETANO SALVEMINI

Cambridge, Mass., June 11

Scandinavian View

Dear Sirs: As an intense reader of American literature I have been searching lately for a periodical which could give me reliable information and also suit my own views in some degree. What irritates me the most in your press is the encouragement your papers —as well as your politicians from Senator William Borah down (or up, as you take it)—so liberally give to the European dictators by constantly repeating that no matter what they do and how they behave, America shall not lift a finger against them.

The Scandinavian countries wish to be neutral, but realize that their water power, timber, fisheries, and metals may be a temptation. Since Munich, however, no Scandinavian government has been able to get up any enthusiasm for armaments. If France and Britain did not allow Czechoslovakia, with its great military power, to fight, they would willingly give up Denmark and Sweden if Hitler demanded it. We wonder at the astonishingly moderate demands from Hitler and Mussolini, seeing how easily they get everything.

We realize that it is difficult for Americans to feel in sympathy with persons like Sir Samuel Hoare, Sir John Simon, Chamberlain, Lords Lothian and Halifax, Lord and Lady Astor—what we call the Birmingham crowd. But we feel that without calling out one soldier or one warship, by a single clear and strong gesture the United States President and Congress could silence the European dictators at once.

OLAV KRINGEN

Oslo, Norway, June 1

Indebtedness Acknowledged

Dear Sirs: Carl Zigrosser's warm review of my biography of Diego Rivera in your issue of April 29 made me extremely conscious of an oversight on my part. Among other matters, Mr. Zigrosser singled out for praise "an illu-

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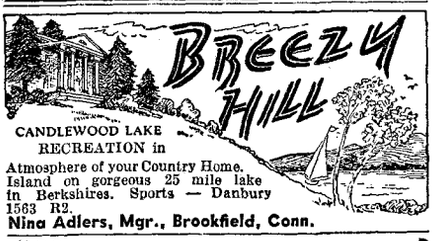

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minating commentary on the schools of Paris, the nature and underlying causes of their revolt against tradition." Before writing those portions of the book in which I attempted to apply the historical methods of Marxism to a field of culture in which I am a mere amateur, I made a study of everything I could lay hands on relating to the subject. My major indebtedness in this regard is to Elie Faure and Meyer Schapiro. My obligation to the former, because his work is already in writing and because of frequent citation, is made abundantly clear. But not so my greater indebtedness to the latter, whose seminal views I have largely picked up through conversations with him and attendance at his lectures at Columbia. The account I give of modern painting in the last three pages of the chapter On the Road to Cubism follows, though no doubt inadequately, the views I have heard him advance.

Having failed to make adequate acknowledgment of that indebtedness in the first edition, I ask the privilege of doing so for its readers through your columns.

BERTRAM D. WOLFE

Brooklyn, N. Y., June 9

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